Dance in the
Vampire Bund
Nozomu Tamaki
Volume 10

Tamaki Nozomu Presents Dance In The Vampire Bund 10

DANCE IN THE VAMPIRE BUND

10

NOZOMU TAMAKI

Wir sind Dickhäuter,

wir strecken die

Hände nacheinander aus,

aber es ist vergebliche Mühe,

wir reiben nur das grobe Leder aneinander ab,

wir sind sehr einsam.

We are all of us beasts,
clothed in a thick skin.
We reach our hands out to one another...
but it is useless.
Our hands may touch, but none can tell.
For all we are doing is rubbing one
unfeeling hide against another.
We are, each and every one of us...
Alone.

Buchner, Dantons Tod, Act 3

Dance In The Vampire Bund 10

Contents

Chapter 54: Doppelgänger
3

Chapter 55: Scheming
33

Chapter 56: Like Anne Frank
63

Chapter 57: Red Doubt
93

Appendix: Bedtime Story
125

Chapter 58: Pandemic
131

Chapter 59: Skyscraper Blues
163

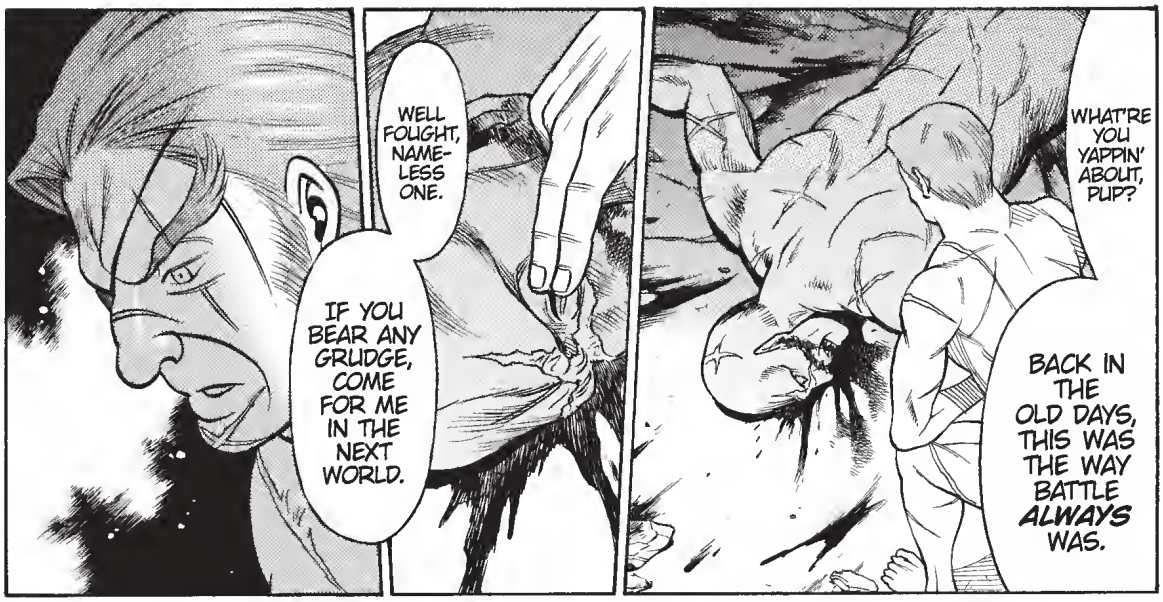
Appendix: Dance with the Vampire Maid
200

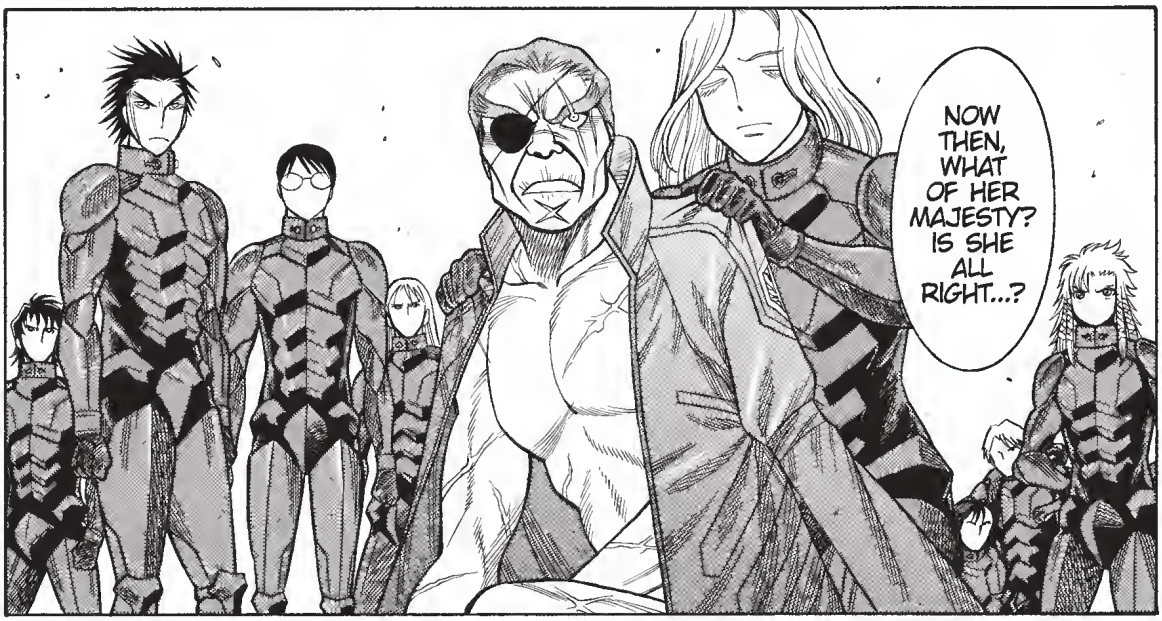
J'ai lâché le paquet. Qu'on m'enferme, qu'on me lynche. Comprenne qui pourra : Je suis un mensonge qui dit toujours la vérité

YOUR MASTER, LORD IVANOVIC, IS DEAD.
THROW DOWN YOUR WEAPONS AND SURRENDER.
ANY FURTHER RESISTANCE IS FUTILE.
I REPEAT ...
KLATTER
KLATTER
ATTENTION, ALL MEMBERS OF THE IVANOVIC CLAN.
THE BATTLE IS OVER.

AWOOO
THUNK
GRFF...
GRUH...
GRUK
GRAK
GRIK

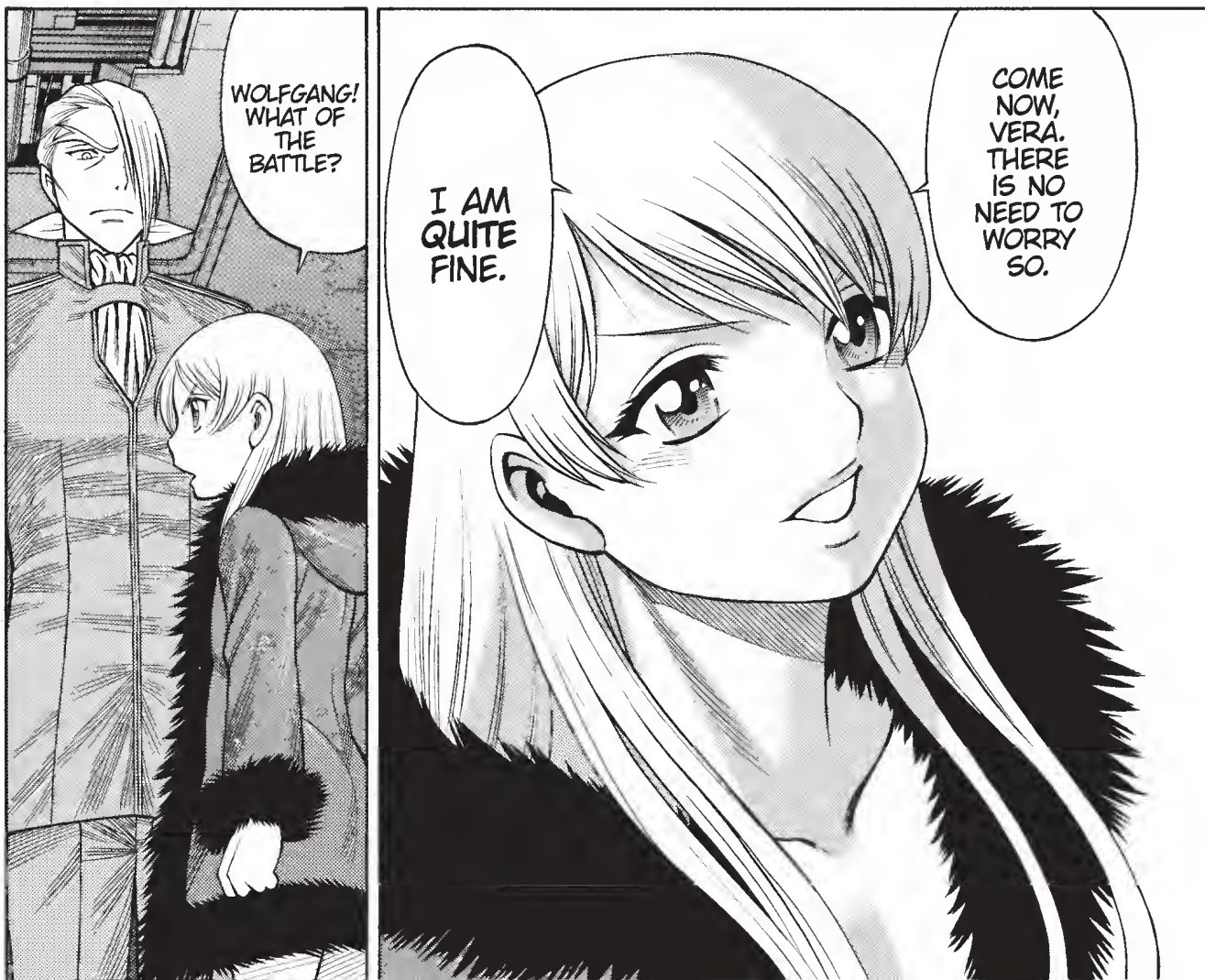
POK
GRIK
GHAAAAH!
GROK
GRUK
DAMN... NEVER THOUGHT I'D SEE THE DAY WHEN I'D BE FIGHTIN' OTHER WERE-WOLVES.


WELL FOUGHT, NAMELESS ONE.
IF YOU BEAR ANY GRUDGE, COME FOR ME IN THE NEXT WORLD.
WHAT'RE YOU YAPPIN' ABOUT, PUP?
BACK IN THE OLD DAYS, THIS WAS THE WAY BATTLE ALWAYS WAS.


NOW THEN, WHAT OF HER MAJESTY? IS SHE ALL RIGHT...?

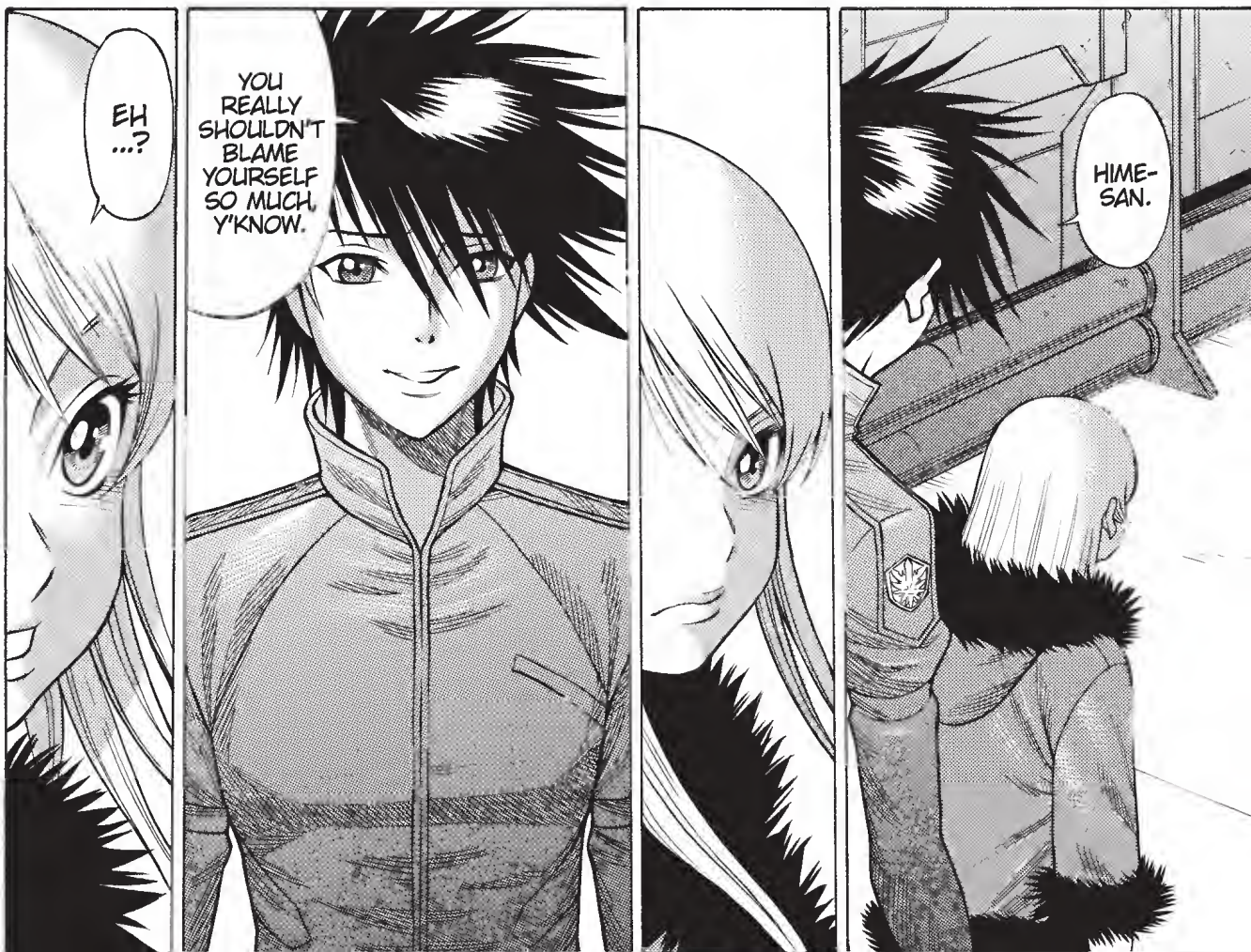
Chapter 54: Doppelgänger

HIME-SAMA !!
OH, THANK ALL THE GODS... YOU ARE SAFE...
.....

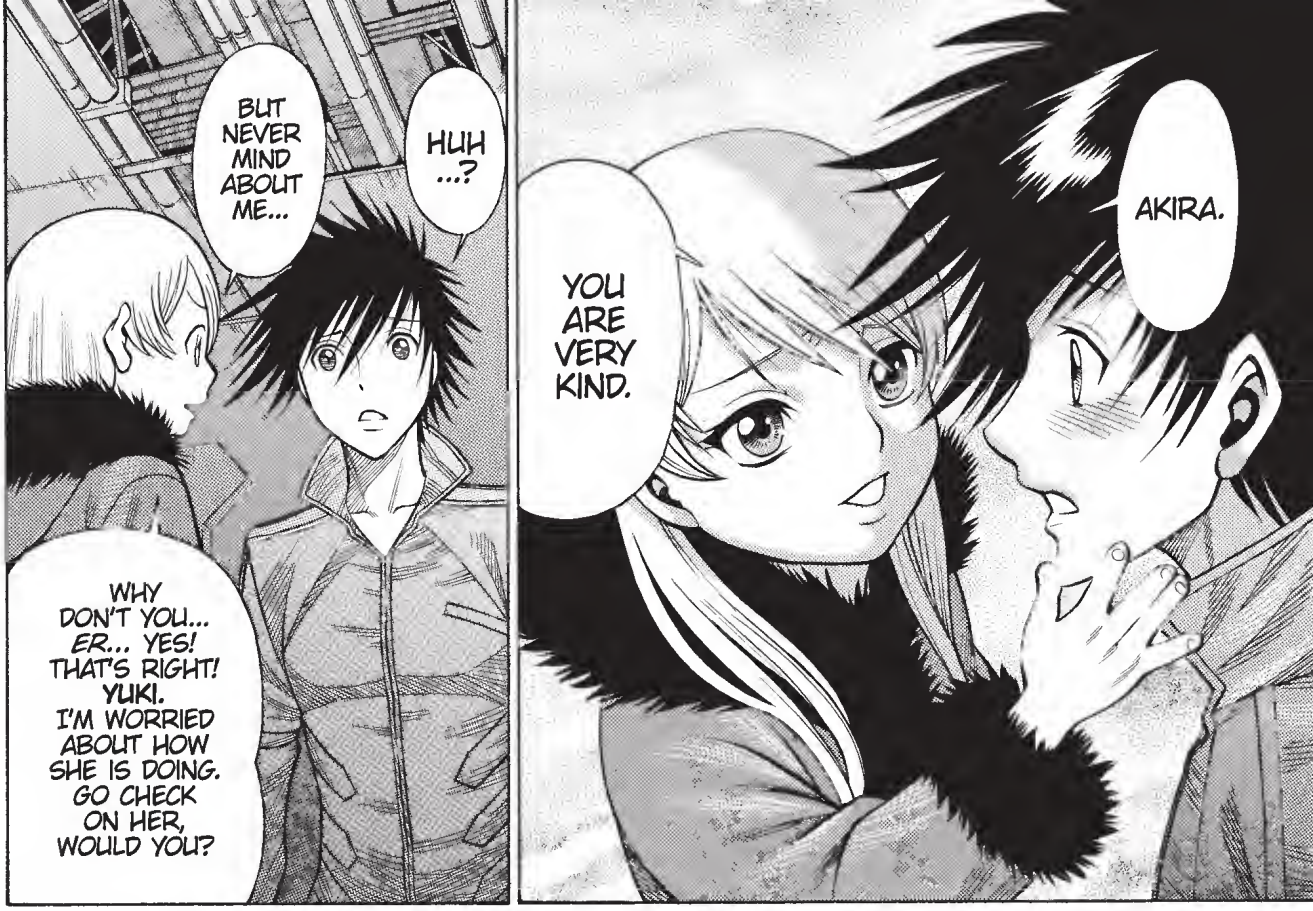

COME NOW, VERA. THERE IS NO NEED TO WORRY SO.
I AM QUITE FINE.
WOLFGANG! WHAT OF THE BATTLE?

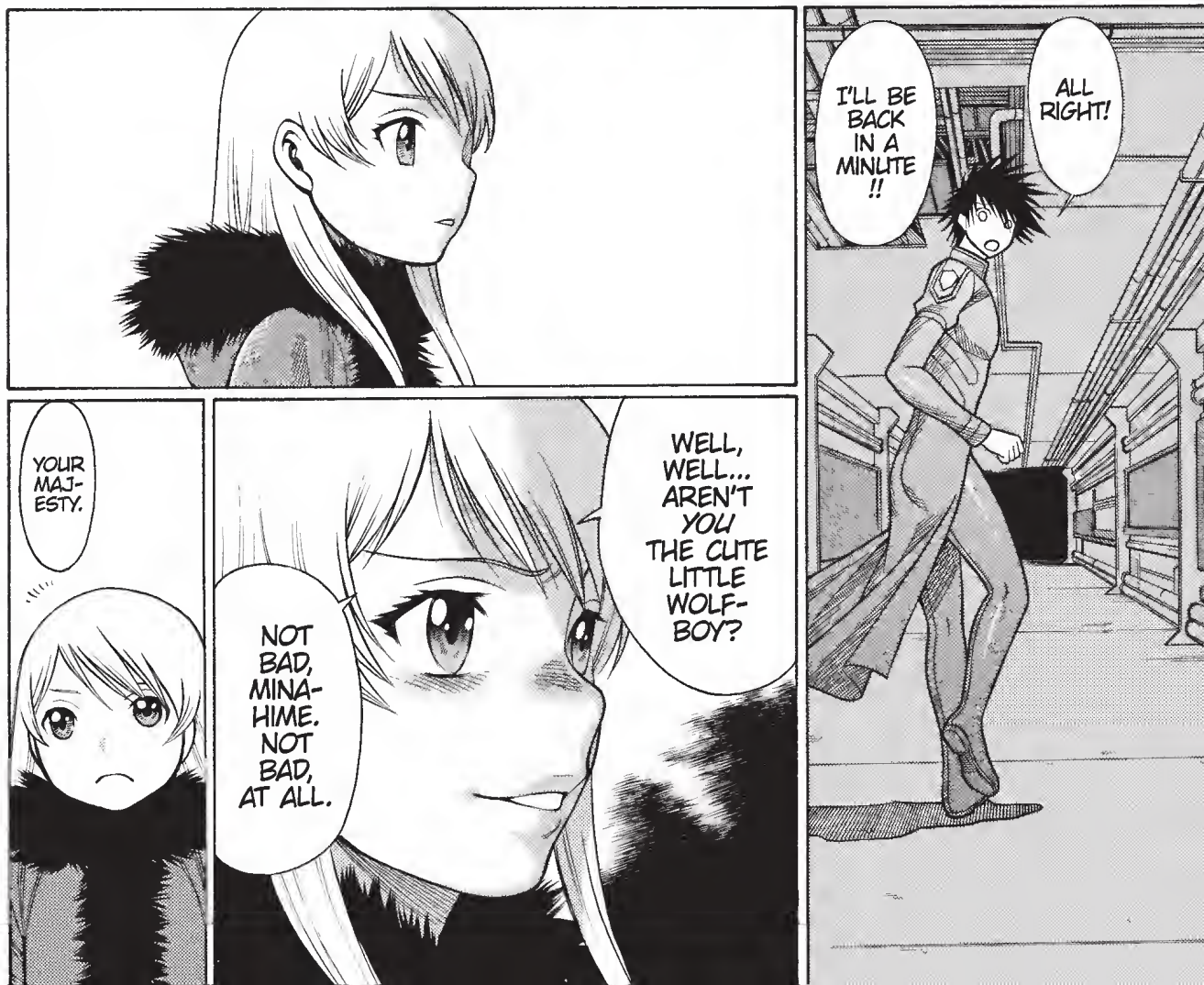
ROUND UP THE REPROGRAMMED CITIZENS AND REPROGRAM THEM YET AGAIN TO BE OUR LOYAL SUBJECTS. ONCE THAT IS COMPLETE, YOU MAY RELEASE THEM.
HOW-EVER ...
IVANOVIC'S PERSONAL GUARD HAS LOST ALL WILL TO FIGHT.
THEY HAVE THROWN DOWN THEIR WEAPONS AND SUR-RENDERED.
AS FOR THE COMMON CITIZENS WHO WERE REPRO-GRAMMED, I BELIEVE THAT IS OBVIOUS ENOUGH.
I WANT EVERY LAST ONE OF THEM TURNED TO ASH BEFORE THE HOUR IS OUT!
THERE WILL BE NO SUCH MERCY FOR IVANOVIC'S LACKEYS. KILL THEM!
ARE YOU... CERTAIN, YOUR MAJESTY?
SEND A GUNBOAT OUT TO THE "KREMLIN," AS WELL. FILL THAT RUSTED TUB WITH SO MANY TORPEDOES THAT ONLY A FEW METAL SCRAPS REMAIN TO POLLUTE THE OCEAN FLOOR.
HIME-SAMA ...

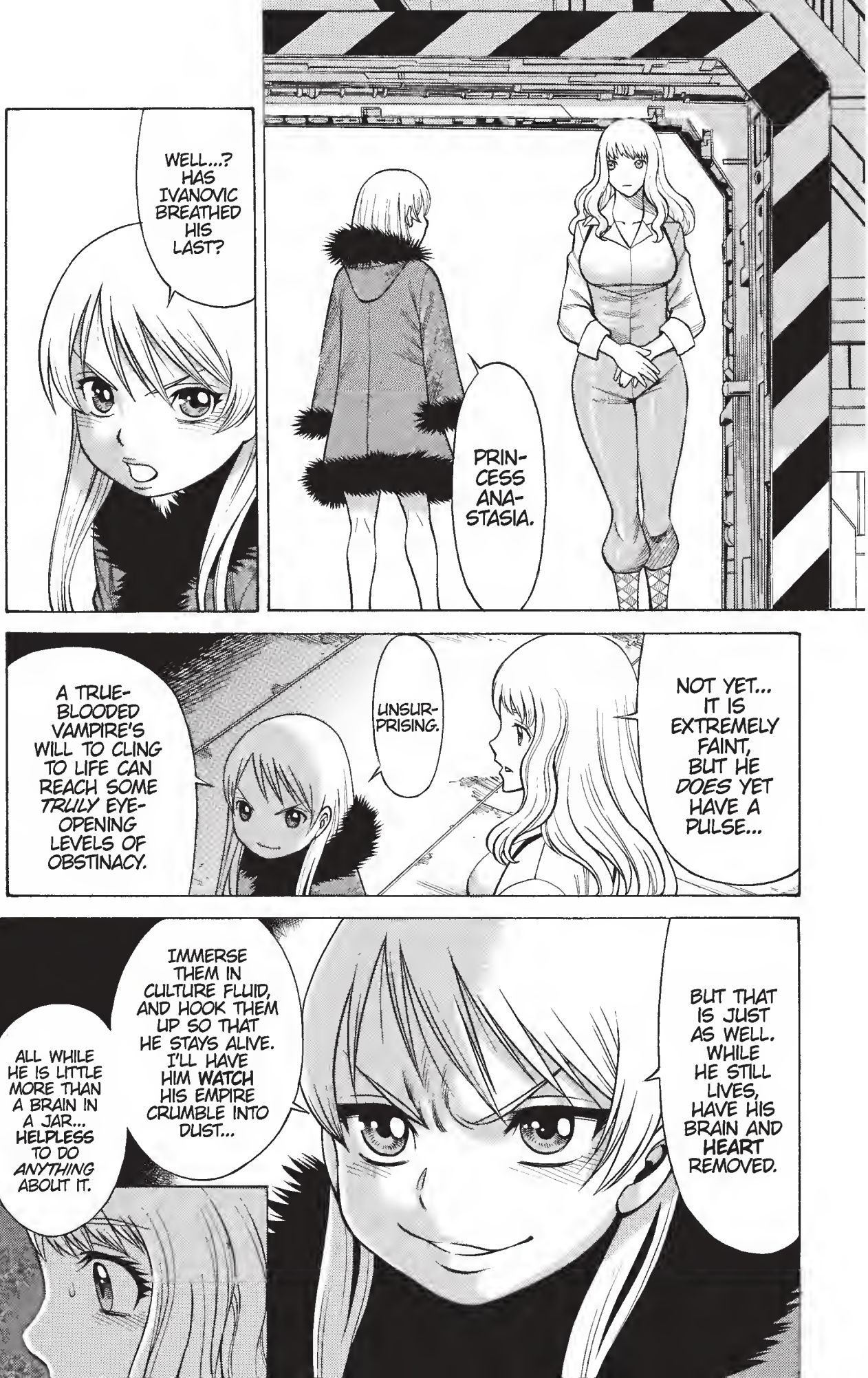
DO IT!
I DO NOT KNOW *WHY* THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT WOULD CHOOSE TO TURN A WILLFULLY BLIND EYE TO THE **INVASION** OF MY BLIND, BUT NOW WE MUST SHOW THEM EXACTLY WHAT SUCH SHORTSIGHTED *FOOLISHNESS* WILL LEAD THEM TO!
HIME-SAMA ...
DID YOU NOT HEAR ME? *GO!*


HIME-SAN.
YOU REALLY SHOULDN'T BLAME YOURSELF SO MUCH, Y'KNOW.
EH ...?

ABOUT NANAMI-SAN...
AND WHAT... WHAT HAPPENED TO HER.
I KNOW IT HAD TO BE A ROUGH DECISION TO MAKE.
IT REALLY HURTS ME THAT I WASN'T FAST ENOUGH TO SAVE HER LIFE, AND SAVE *YOU* FROM MAKING THAT CHOICE. TRUST ME, IT DOES...
OH ...
RIGHT.
BUT STILL, WHAT HAPPENED *IS NOT YOUR FAULT.*
JUST REMEM-BER THAT.
.....


AKIRA.
YOU ARE VERY KIND.
HUH ...?
BUT NEVER MIND ABOUT ME...
WHY DON'T YOU... ER... YES! THAT'S RIGHT! YUKI. I'M WORRIED ABOUT HOW SHE IS DOING. GO CHECK ON HER, WOULD YOU?


ALL RIGHT!
I'LL BE BACK IN A MINUTE !!
WELL, WELL... AREN'T YOU THE CUTE LITTLE WOLF-BOY?
NOT BAD, MINA-HIME. NOT BAD, AT ALL.
YOUR MAJ-ESTY.

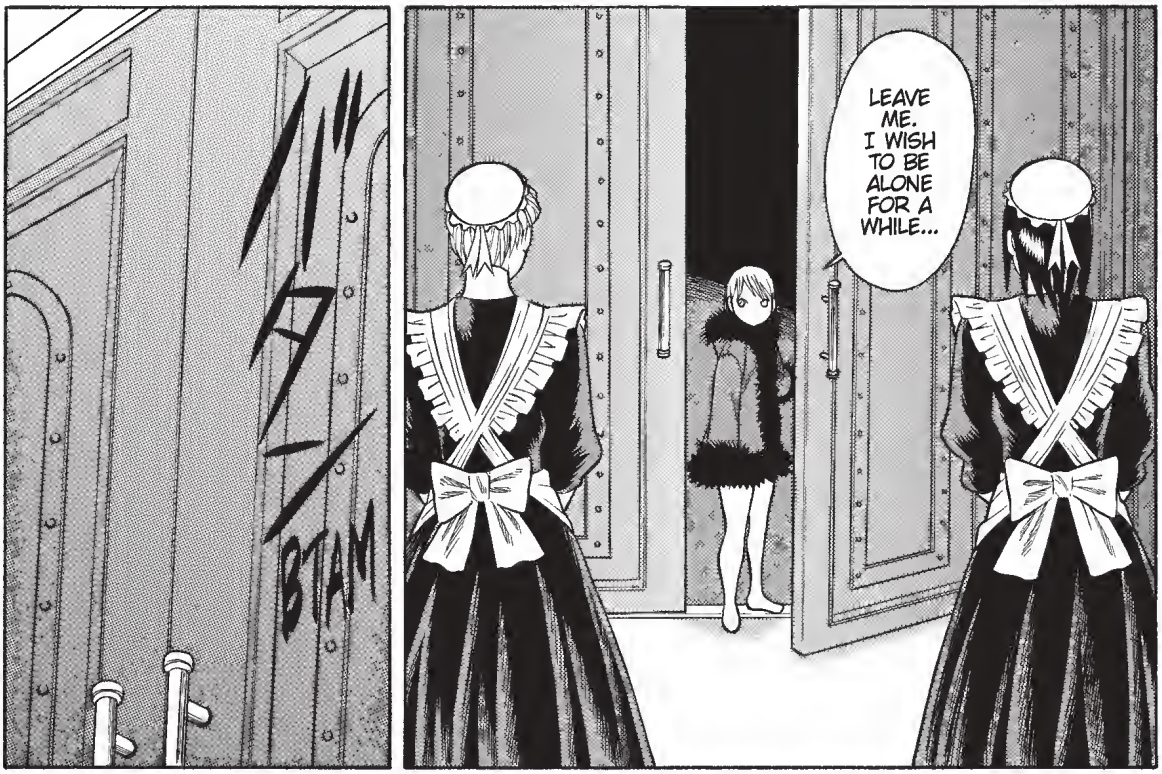

WELL...? HAS IVANOVIC BREATHED HIS LAST?
PRIN-CESS ANA-STASIA.
NOT YET... IT IS EXTREMELY FAINT, BUT HE DOES YET HAVE A PULSE...
UNSUR-PRISING.
A TRUE-BLOODED VAMPIRE'S WILL TO CLING TO LIFE CAN REACH SOME TRULY EYE-OPENING LEVELS OF OBSTINACY.
BUT THAT IS JUST AS WELL. WHILE HE STILL LIVES, HAVE HIS BRAIN AND HEART REMOVED.
IMMERSE THEM IN CULTURE FLUID, AND HOOK THEM UP SO THAT HE STAYS ALIVE. I'LL HAVE HIM WATCH HIS EMPIRE CRUMBLE INTO DUST...
ALL WHILE HE IS LITTLE MORE THAN A BRAIN IN A JAR... HELPLESS TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT.

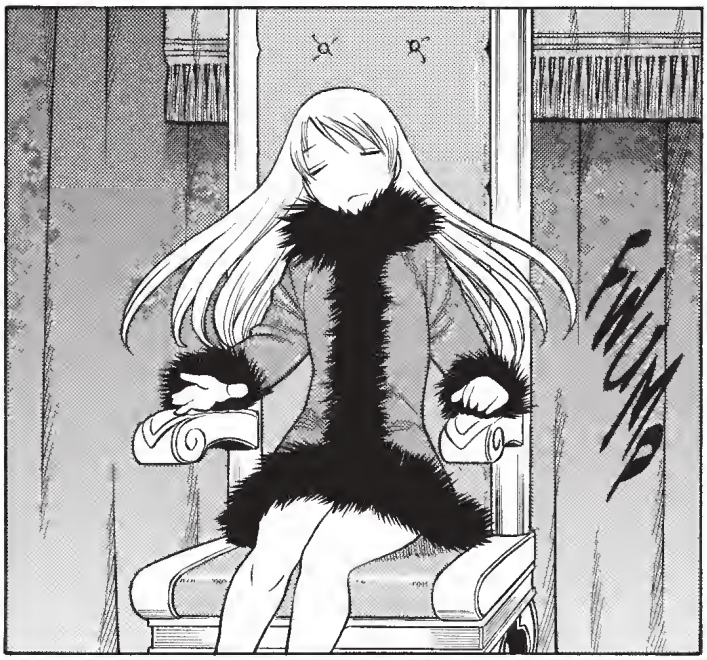
OH, DON'T WORRY ...
THERE IS NO WAY HE WILL EVER STAND UPON TWO LEGS AGAIN.
HIS OWN BODY IS ROTTEN AND DAMAGED BEYOND HIS ABILITY TO REGENERATE IT.
RE-LAX.
HE WOULD HAVE TO TAKE OVER AN ENTIRELY NEW BODY, AND NO ONE IS FOOLISH ENOUGH TO GET THAT CLOSE...

BRAIN ACTIVITY WITHIN ACCEPT-ABLE PARA-METERS.
HEART RATE STABLE ...
AND THERE... SEVER-ANCE COMPLETE ...
GOOD. BEGIN ARTIFI-CIAL BLOOD CIRCULA-TION.
EXCEL-LENT. MOVE HIM OUT.
!
V.G.S
G.S

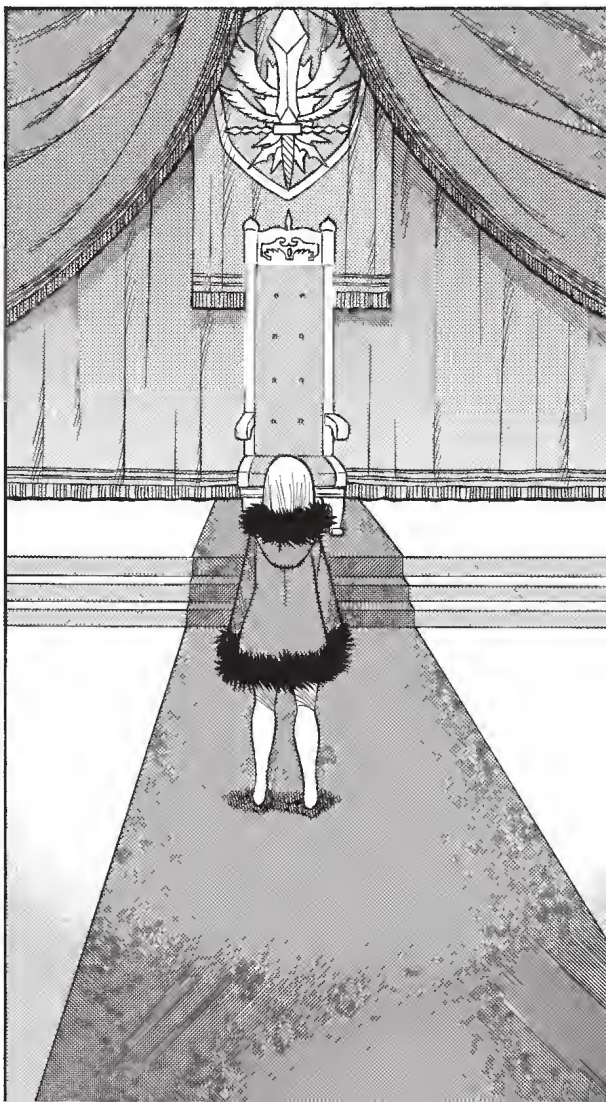
HEY, YOU THERE.
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR ARM?! IF YOU'RE INJURED, YOU SHOULD...
G.S
SPLK
KO
FWISH
WHAT THE --?!
PSHHHH
SPLAK
MY LORD ...
MY LORD IVAN-OVIC ...!

BTHMP
YOU...
YOU STILL LIVE!!
GRIK


BTAM
LEAVE ME. I WISH TO BE ALONE FOR A WHILE...


FWUMP

HEH.
.....



KREAK
NOW...
WHERE, OH *WHERE*, SHALL I BEGIN?
AH HA HA HA HA !!
HA HA HA...
AHA HA HA HA!
IT WAS MINA'S POWER AND INFLUENCE.
AH, WELL. WHAT I TRULY WANTED WASN'T THIS BIT OF UPHOL-STERY.
AND IT'S *ONLY* A SIMPLE, COMMON CHAIR.
ALL THE TIME AND EFFORT I PUT INTO GETTING THIS...

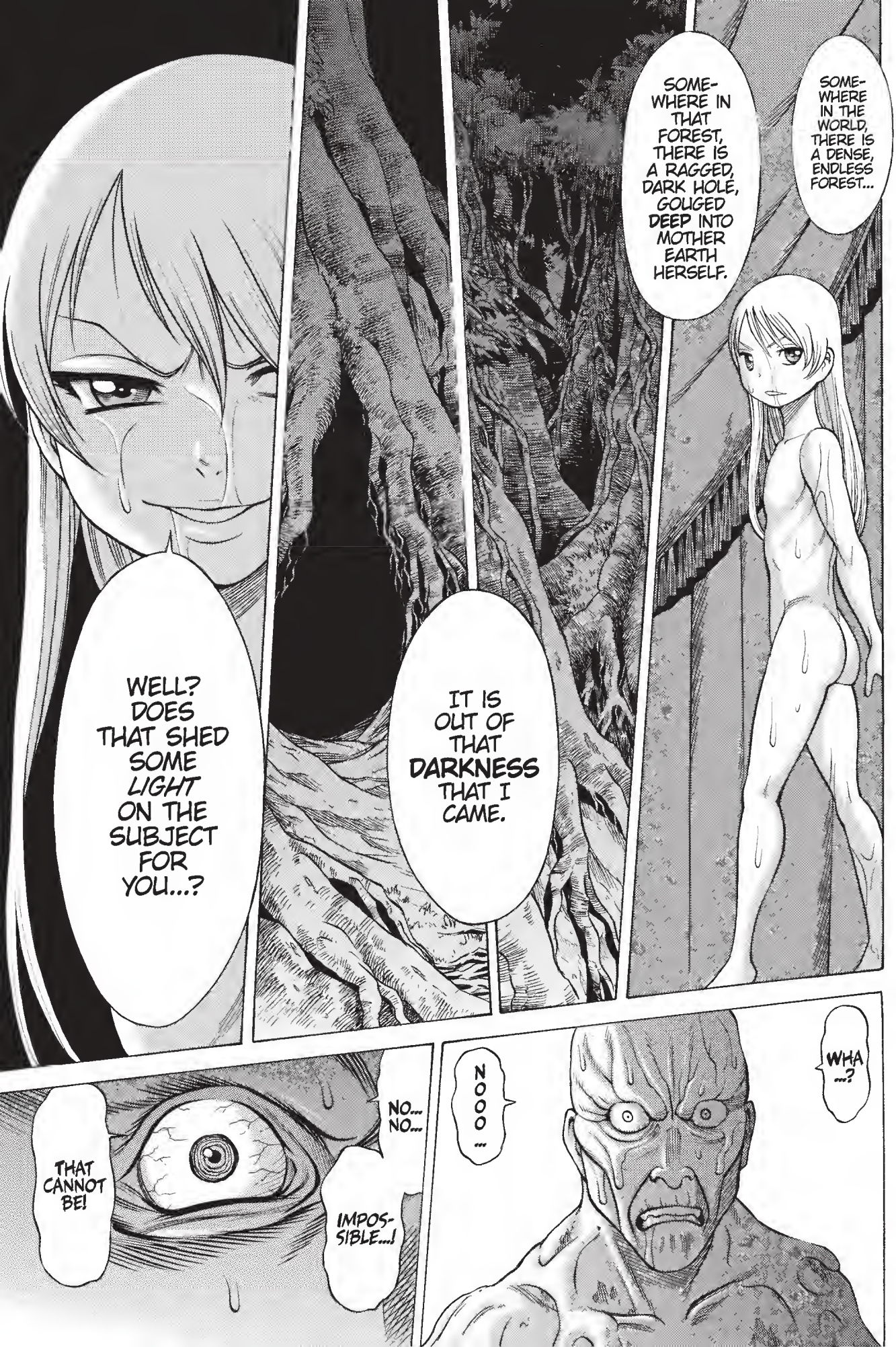
SHUUK
MI... NA...
YOU...
MIIII...
BWOOSH
SKRAK

GRIK
GRIK
!
IVANOVIC!!
I SEE.
SO THAT'S WHAT YOU DID...
YOU ABSORBED HIS BRAIN AND HEART INTO YOUR OWN FLESH!!
I HAD HEARD OF THE POWER OF THAT NEW BREED OF YOURS.
I MUST ADMIT, THIS IS ONE VERY CREATIVE USE FOR IT.

HEY, THERE. JUST WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU ARE DOING, EXPOSING YOURSELF TO A LADY?
YOU WOULDN'T DARE DO SOMETHING *THAT* UNCOUTH, NOW WOULD YOU?
SPLORK
ボトトト
SHLUP
THIS... BODY... WILL NOT LAST MUCH LONGER ...
I MUST... MUST PRE-SERVE THE BLOOD-LINE...
AND YOU...
BWOOSH
YOU WILL BEAR MY SEED !!!

AH. AHUH ...
AAH ...
SPLAT
SPLAT
PLSSSSH!!
PSHHHHH
GRAAAH...
GHAH...
AAH...
SLUK!!

YOU... YOU ARE NOT HER!
WHO ARE YOU?!
MY, MY...
AND SO THE FIRST ONE TO DISCOVER ME IS NOT A "FRIEND," BUT AN "ENEMY." HOW WONDERFULLY IRONIC.
YOU ARE CORRECT.
I AM NOT MINA, YET.
YOU COULD PERHAPS CALL US SISTERS, OF A SORT...
AFTER ALL, IN THE LONG LINE OF TRUEBLOODS, IT WAS NOT ENTIRELY UNHEARD OF FOR TWINS TO BE BORN.
THOUGH, MAYBE THAT IS NOT QUITE... ACCURATE.
PERHAPS THEN, YOU COULD CALL ME A CLONE.
IT'S NOT IMPOSSIBLE.
I DID HEAR THAT ONE OF THE THREE GREAT CLANS IS WORKING ON PERFECTING THAT TECHNOLOGY EVEN NOW, YOU KNOW...
HARLOT...!


SOMEWHERE IN THE WORLD, THERE IS A DENSE, ENDLESS FOREST...
SOMEWHERE IN THAT FOREST, THERE IS A RAGGED, DARK HOLE, GOUGED DEEP INTO MOTHER EARTH HERSELF.
IT IS OUT OF THAT DARKNESS THAT I CAME.
WELL? DOES THAT SHED SOME LIGHT ON THE SUBJECT FOR YOU...?
WHA...?
NOOO...
NO... NO...
IMPOSSIBLE...!
THAT CANNOT BE!

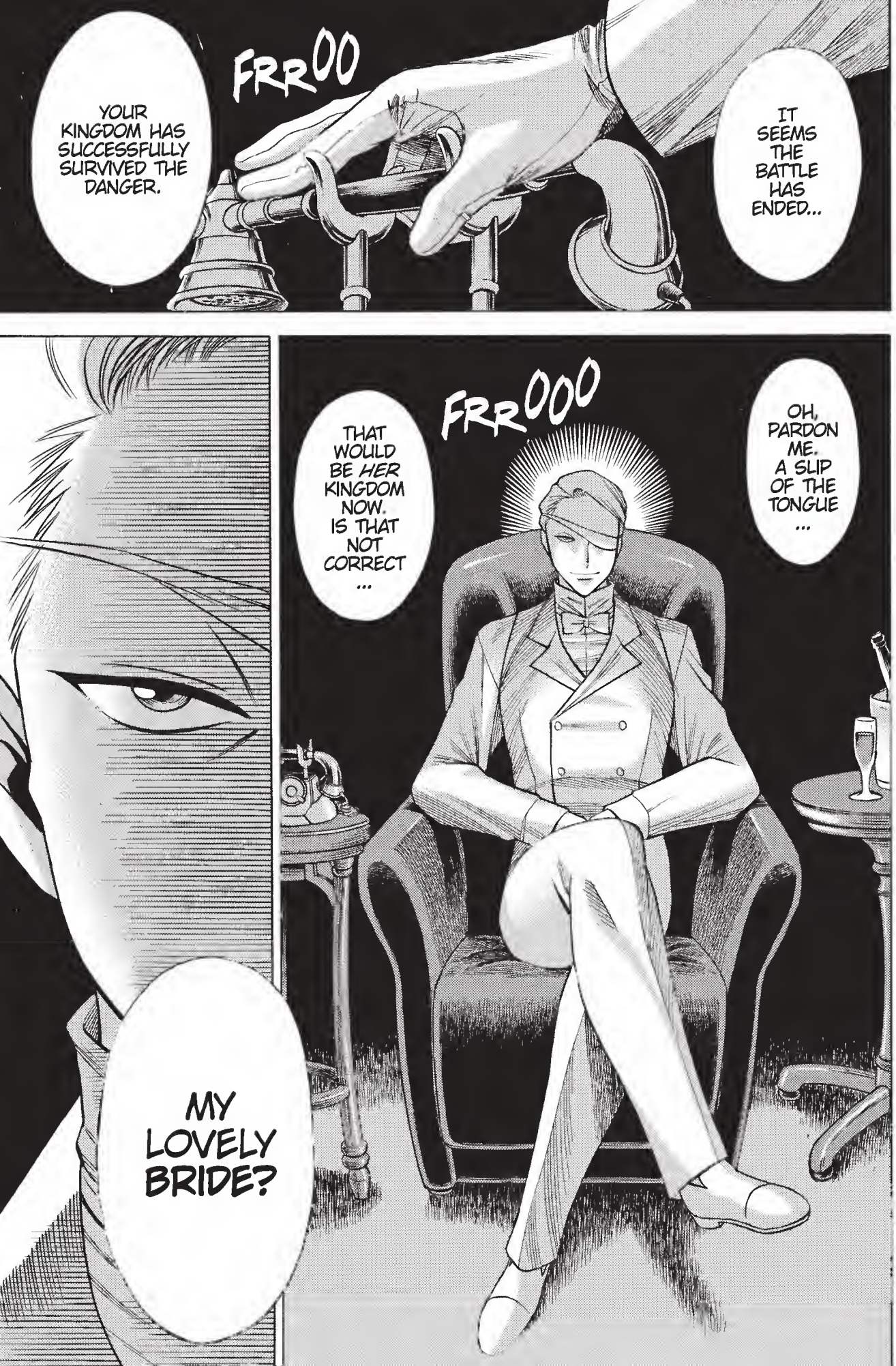
ROZENMANN!!
ROZEN-MANN, YOU TREACH-EROUS SON OF A WHORE !!
DO YOU MEAN TO BRING AN END TO THE LONG AND GLORIOUS HISTORY OF THE TRUE-BLOODED VAMPIRES ?!
OH, THAT ENDED CENTU-RIES AGO, IVAN-OVIC.
IT CAME CRASHING DOWN THE VERY DAY MINA WAS BORN...
BUT DO NOT BE SO DESPON-DENT.
AFTER ALL, YOU WILL NOT BE AROUND TO WITNESS THE LAST DEATH THROES OF YOUR BELOVED RACE.

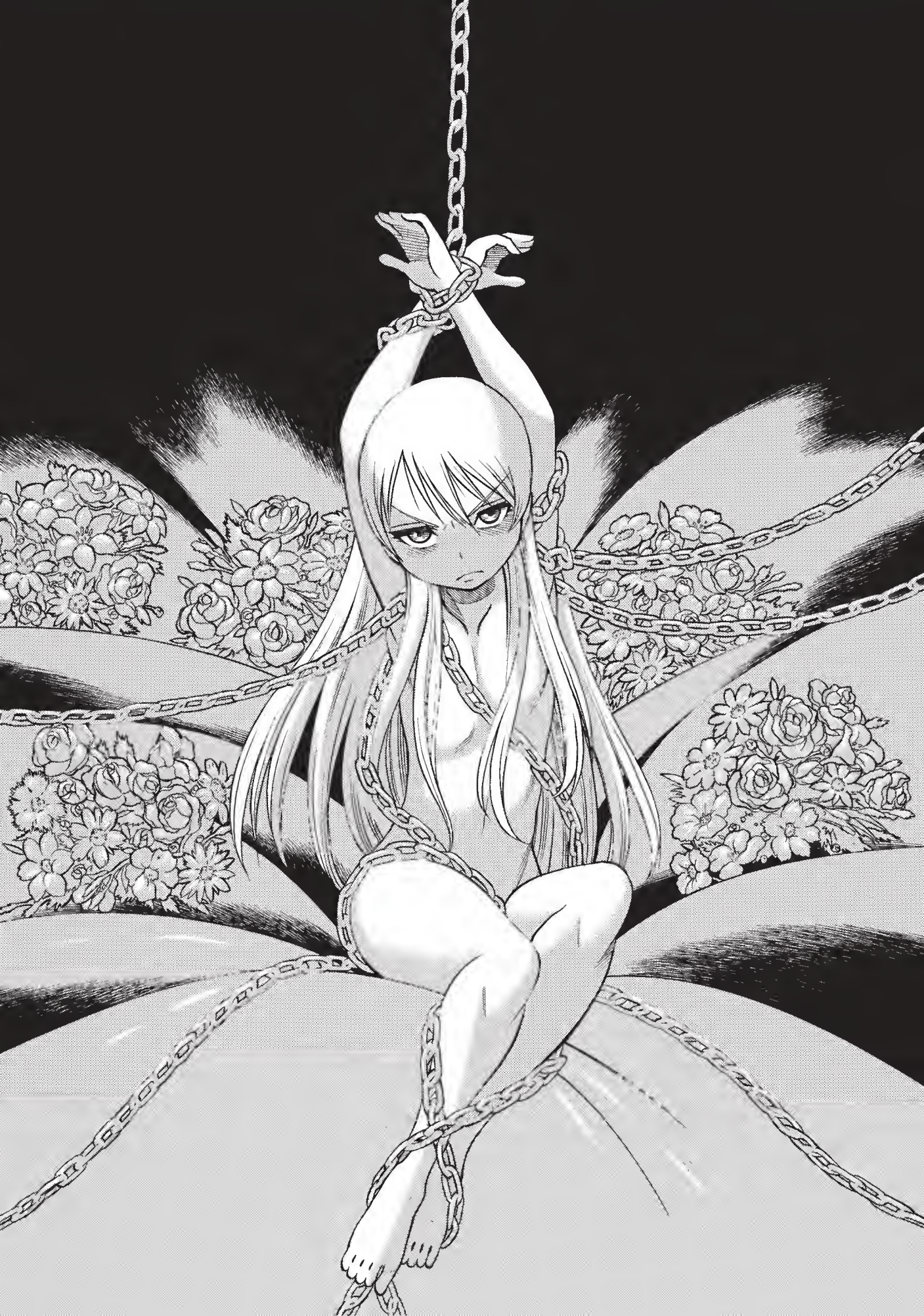
BACK UP! I'LL BREAK IT DOWN!!
VERA-SAN!
HIME-SAMA!
HIME-SAMA!!
PSHHH
DO NOT WORRY... IT IS OVER.
Kneeee

LISTEN, EVERY-ONE. NOW OUR TRUE WORK BEGINS!
VERA! WOLFGANG! YOU WILL BE FLYING TO RUSSIA AS SOON AS A PLANE CAN BE PREPARED.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT ?!
HIME-SAMA!
.....
YOU ARE TO EXPEL WHATEVER REMAINS OF IVANOVIC'S FORCES, AND ANNEX HIS HOLDINGS IN THE NAME OF THE ROYAL FAMILY.
IT WILL BE A GREAT UNDER-TAKING, BUT I TRUST YOU TO HANDLE IT WELL.
YOUR MAJESTY! THE GUN-BOAT HAS LOCATED THE "KREMLIN"!
WE AWAIT YOUR COM-MAND !
SINK IT.

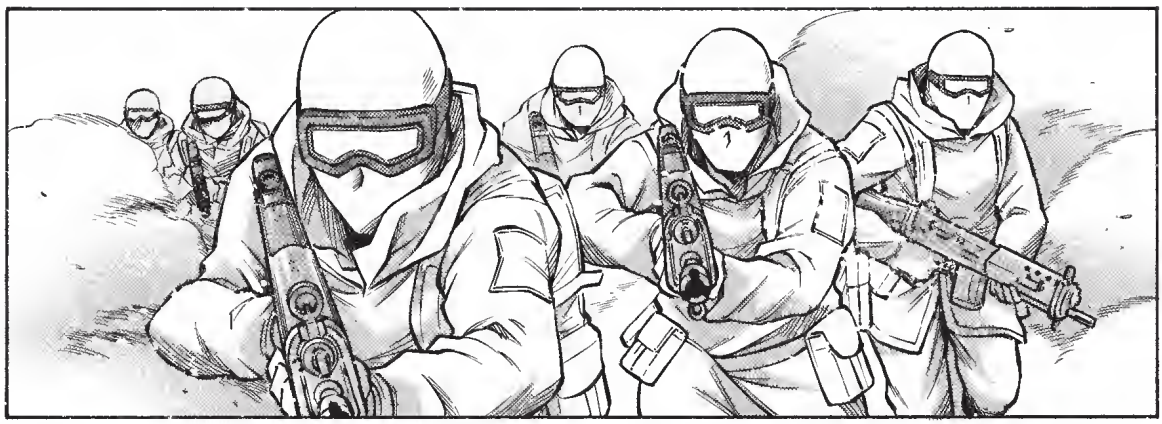
RMBLE
ゴォ…
BOOOOM

FROO


FRROO
YOUR KINGDOM HAS SUCCESSFULLY SURVIVED THE DANGER.
IT SEEMS THE BATTLE HAS ENDED...
FRROOO
THAT WOULD BE HER KINGDOM NOW. IS THAT NOT CORRECT ...
OH, PARDON ME. A SLIP OF THE TONGUE ...
MY LOVELY BRIDE?

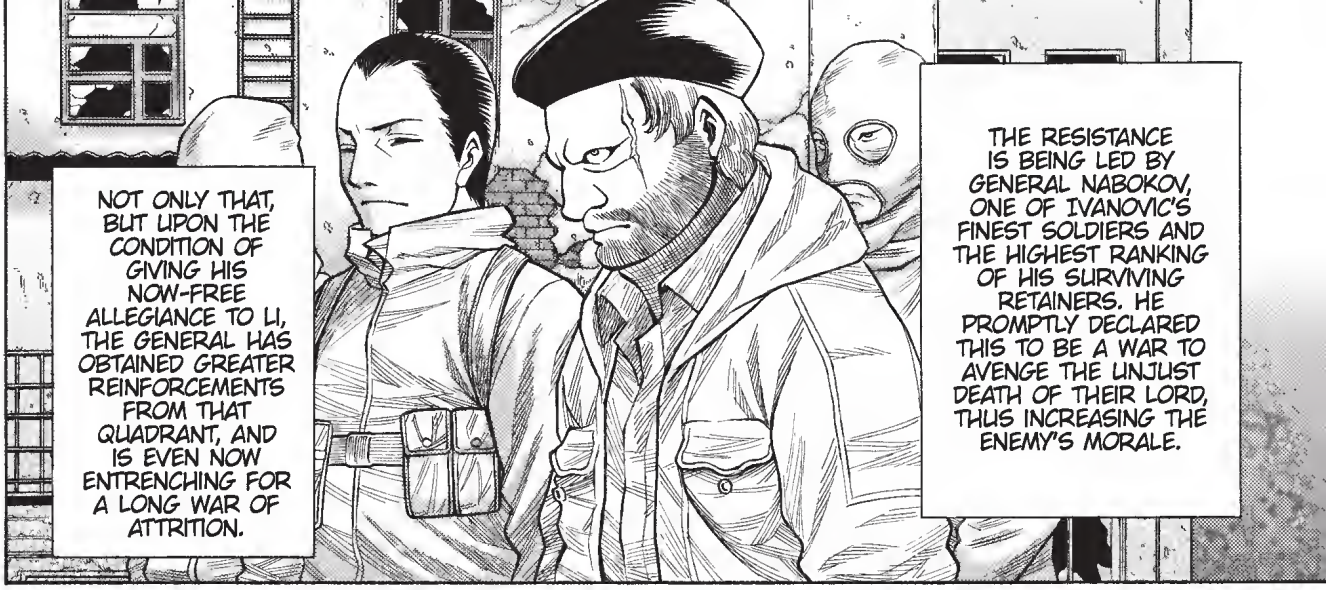


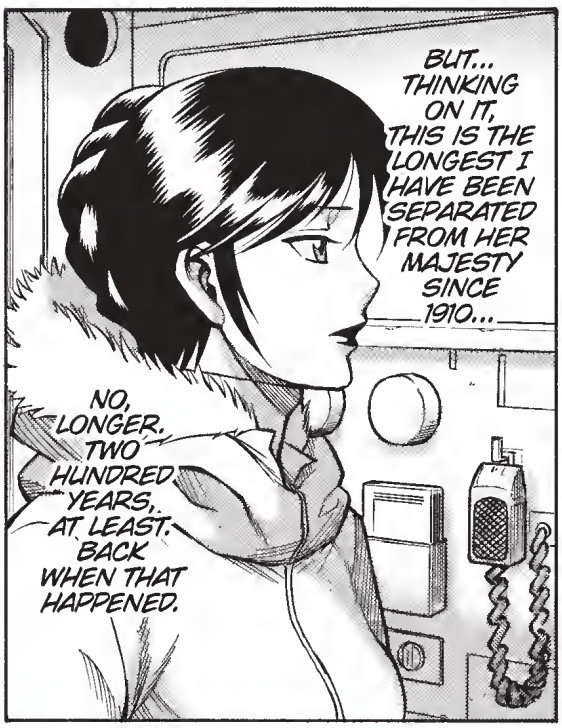
HFF ...
HFF ...
K-KRAK
SPAK
PSHHHH

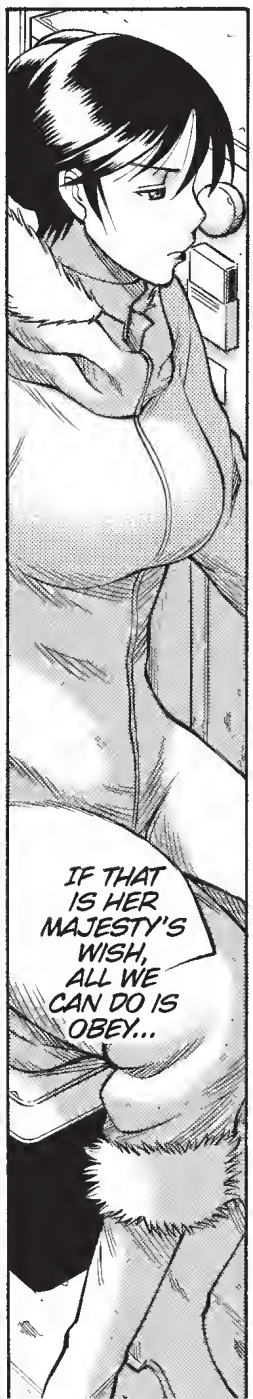


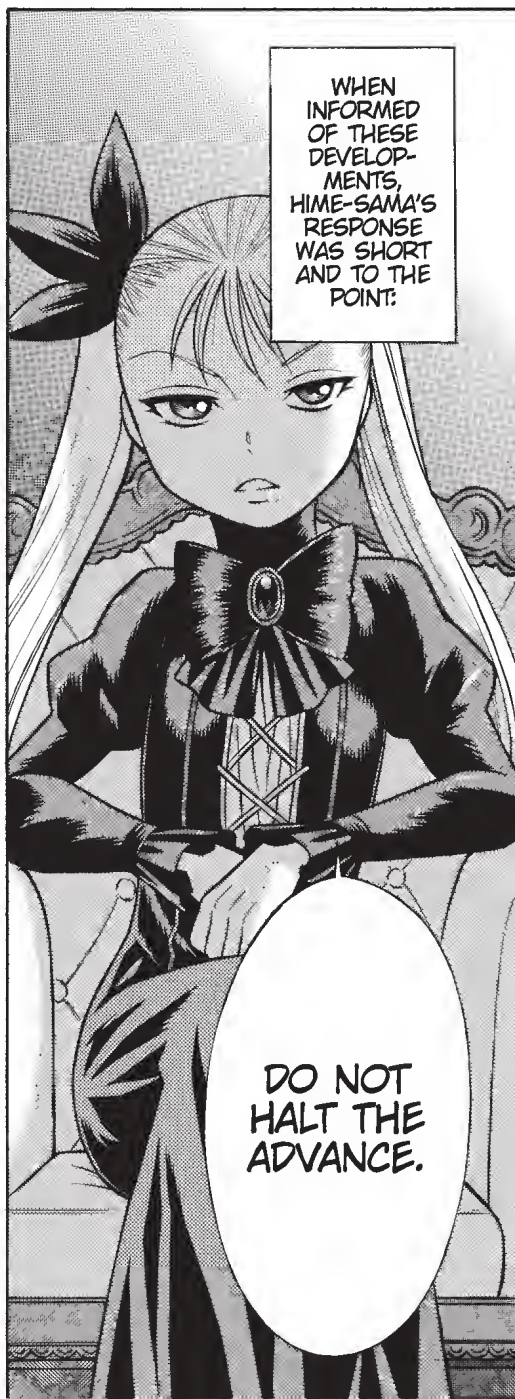
Chapter 55: Scheming

COMMANDER'S LOG, ENTRY 189:2. RECORDED BY VERATOS CARMENCITA LAGASH.
CONTINUE TO SNUFF THEM OUT AS YOU FIND THEM.
DO NOT LET EVEN ONE SOLDIER ESCAPE ALIVE.
ORIGINALLY BELIEVED TO BE A QUICK MISSION TO MOP UP A FEW FRAGMENTED OUTPOSTS, OUR ADVANCE HAS BEEN BOGGED DOWN BY SURPRISINGLY STIFF RESISTANCE FROM AN UNEXPECTED QUARTER.
IT HAS BEEN ONE MONTH SINCE ALMOST THE ENTIRETY OF BEOWULF WAS DEPLOYED TO RUSSIA ON ITS CURRENT SEARCH-AND-DESTROY MISSION AGAINST THE REMNANTS OF IVANOVIC'S CLAN.
IT HAD BEEN ASSUMED BY ALL THAT LORD LI, HAVING TO DEAL WITH THE PIED PIPER EPIDEMIC IN HIS OWN LANDS, WOULD STAND NEUTRAL IN THIS CONFLICT. HIS INVOLVEMENT CAME AS A COMPLETE SURPRISE AND CAUGHT US, ADMITTEDLY, ENTIRELY UNPREPARED.
UNEXPECT-EDLY WELL ORGANIZED, THE RESISTANCE WAS AIDED BY, OF ALL THINGS, DETACHMENTS OF LORD LI'S ELITE TROOPS.
SECURING THE EASTERN PART OF IVANOVIC'S HOLDINGS WAS SIMPLE, AND TOOK LITTLE MORE THAN A WEEK. HOWEVER, THAT IS WHEN IVANOVIC'S FORCES BEGAN A COUNTER-OFFENSIVE.


NOT ONLY THAT, BUT UPON THE CONDITION OF GIVING HIS NOW-FREE ALLEGIANCE TO LI, THE GENERAL HAS OBTAINED GREATER REINFORCEMENTS FROM THAT QUADRANT, AND IS EVEN NOW ENTRENCHING FOR A LONG WAR OF ATTRITION.
THE RESISTANCE IS BEING LED BY GENERAL NABOKOV, ONE OF IVANOVIC'S FINEST SOLDIERS AND THE HIGHEST RANKING OF HIS SURVIVING RETAINERS. HE PROMPTLY DECLARED THIS TO BE A WAR TO AVENGE THE UNJUST DEATH OF THEIR LORD, THUS INCREASING THE ENEMY'S MORALE.


BUT... THINKING ON IT, THIS IS THE LONGEST I HAVE BEEN SEPARATED FROM HER MAJESTY SINCE 1910...
NO, LONGER. TWO HUNDRED YEARS, AT LEAST. BACK WHEN THAT HAPPENED.


IF THAT IS HER MAJESTY'S WISH, ALL WE CAN DO IS OBEY...


WHEN INFORMED OF THESE DEVELOP-MENTS, HIME-SAMA'S RESPONSE WAS SHORT AND TO THE POINT:
DO NOT HALT THE ADVANCE.

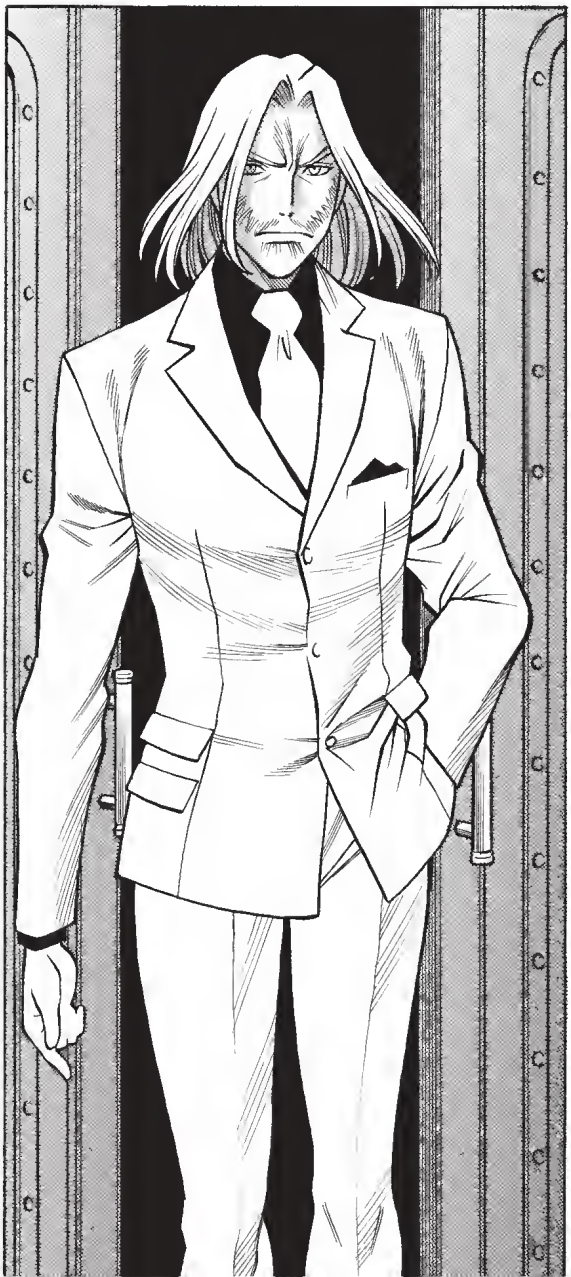
A VERY BAD FEELING HAS TAKEN UP RESIDENCE IN MY HEART, AND IT WILL NOT BE DISLODGED...
IT CONFUSES ME. THINGS TODAY, ARE SO VERY DIFFERENT FROM THE WAY THEY WERE DURING THAT TIME...

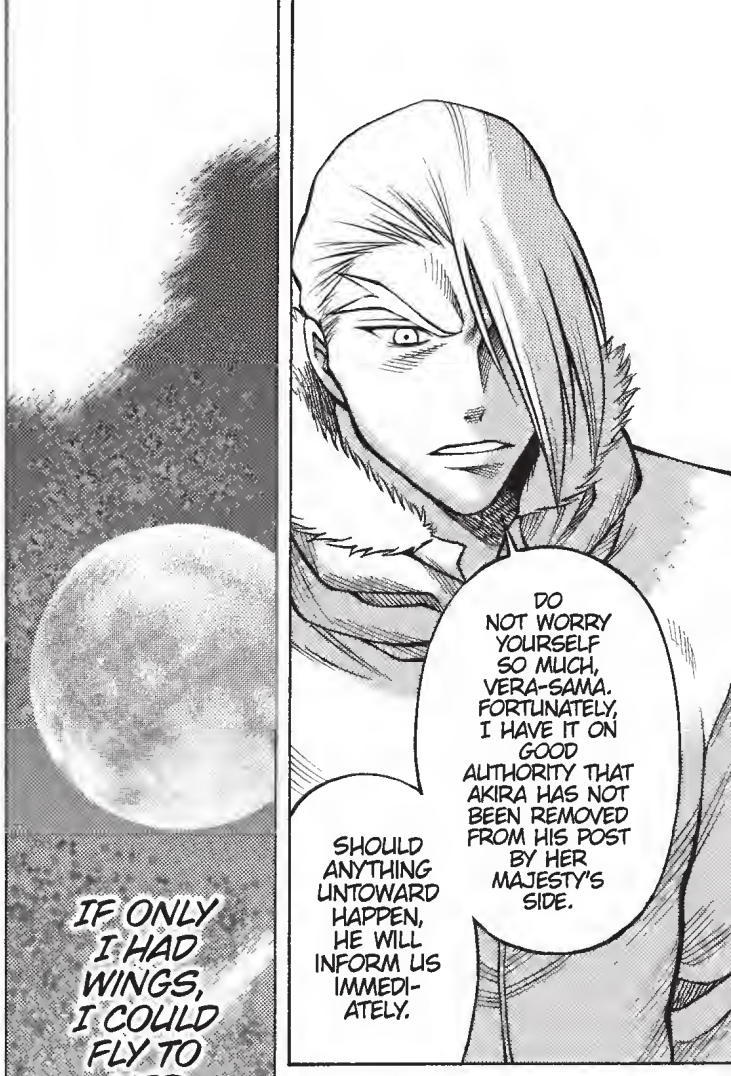
NO.
APPARENTLY, SHE WAS IN CONFERENCE WITH COUNCILOR GOTOH, AND HAD NOT THE LEISURE TO SPEAK WITH ME.
FSHT
WOLF-GANG-DONO!
HOW DID YOU FARE? DID HER MAJESTY HEAR OUT YOUR REPORT?!

YES.
AGAIN.
DUKE BORGIANI, AGAIN...?

STILL, I CANNOT SHAKE THE DOUBT THAT I MAY NEVER AGAIN LAY EYES UPON HER MAJESTY...

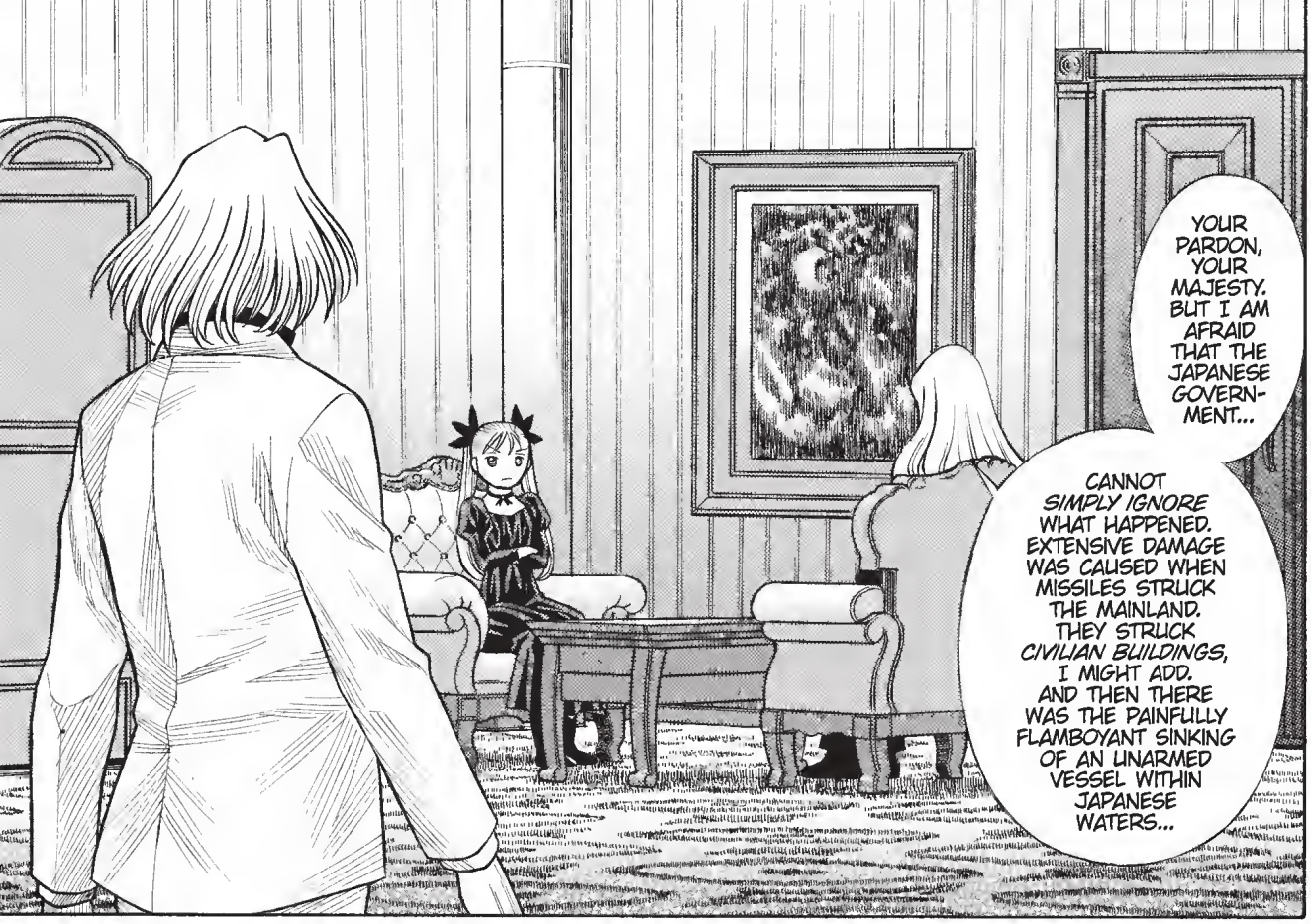
YOU MAY LEAVE.

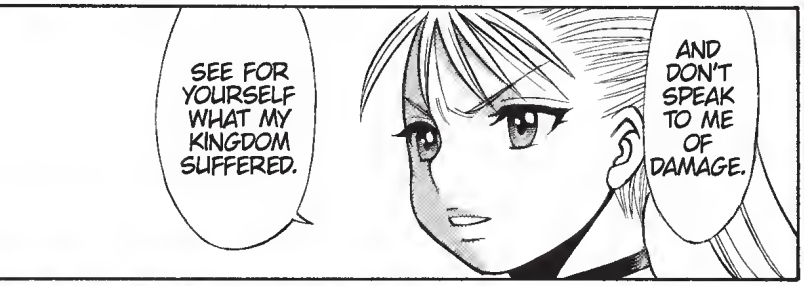



DO NOT WORRY YOURSELF SO MUCH, VERA-SAMA. FORTUNATELY, I HAVE IT ON GOOD AUTHORITY THAT AKIRA HAS NOT BEEN REMOVED FROM HIS POST BY HER MAJESTY'S SIDE.
SHOULD ANYTHING UNTOWARD HAPPEN, HE WILL INFORM US IMMEDI-ATELY.

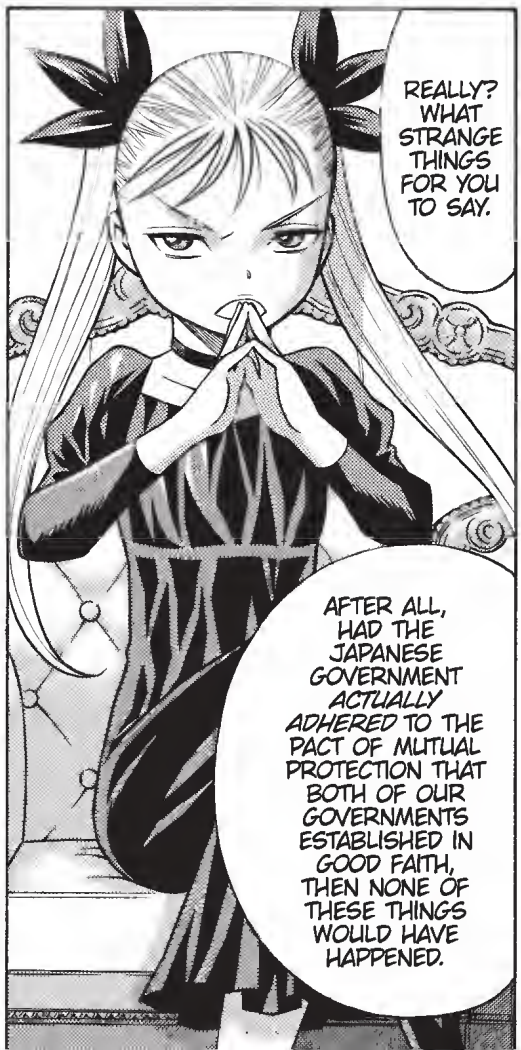
IF ONLY I HAD WINGS, I COULD FLY TO HER MAJESTY'S SIDE THIS VERY MOMENT...!

SOME-THING "UN-TOWARD" ...
AAH ...

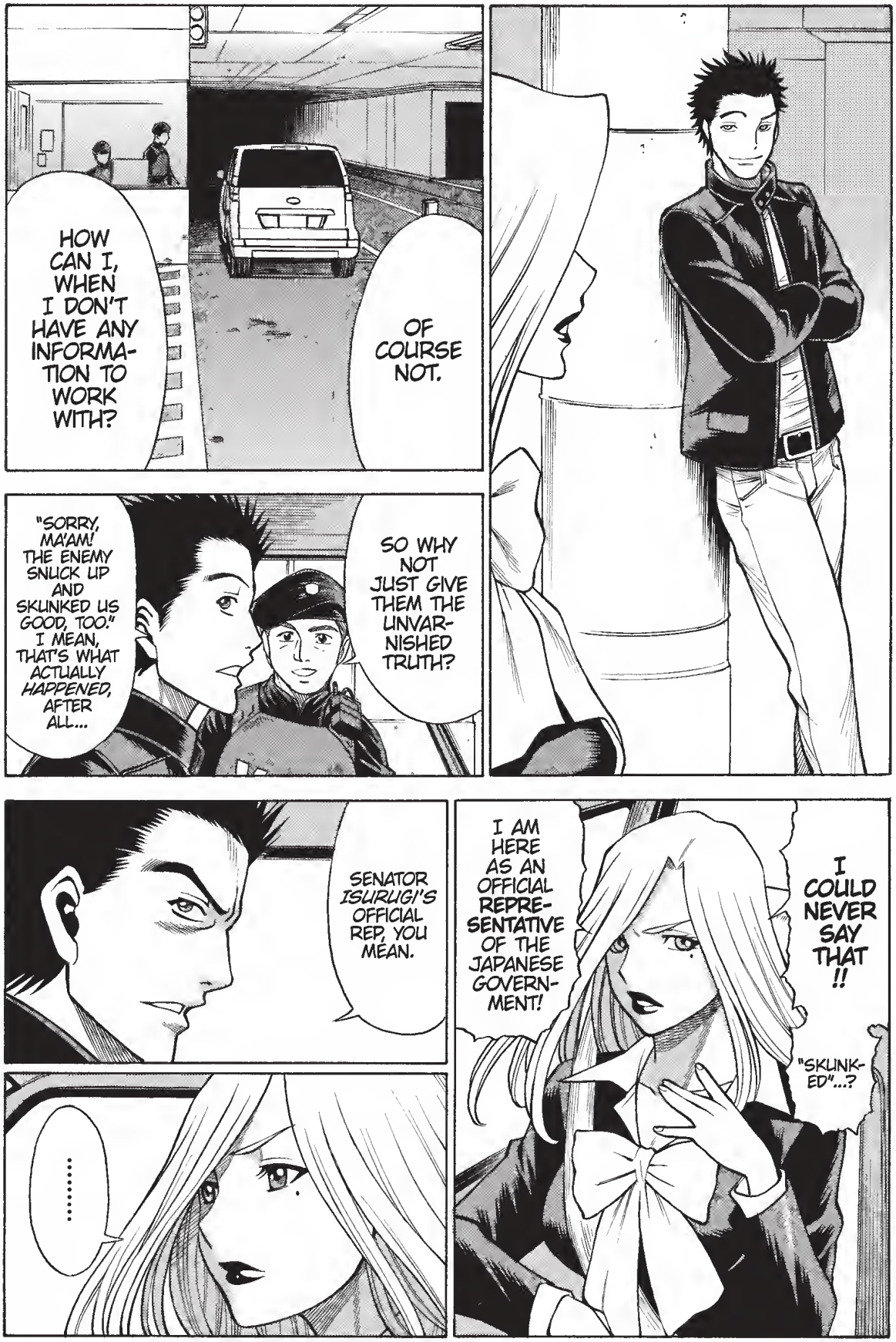

YOUR PARDON, YOUR MAJESTY. BUT I AM AFRAID THAT THE JAPANESE GOVERN-MENT...
CANNOT *SIMPLY IGNORE* WHAT HAPPENED. EXTENSIVE DAMAGE WAS CAUSED WHEN MISSILES STRUCK THE MAINLAND. THEY STRUCK *CIVILIAN BUILDINGS*, I MIGHT ADD. AND THEN THERE WAS THE PAINFULLY FLAMBOYANT SINKING OF AN UNARMED VESSEL WITHIN JAPANESE WATERS...

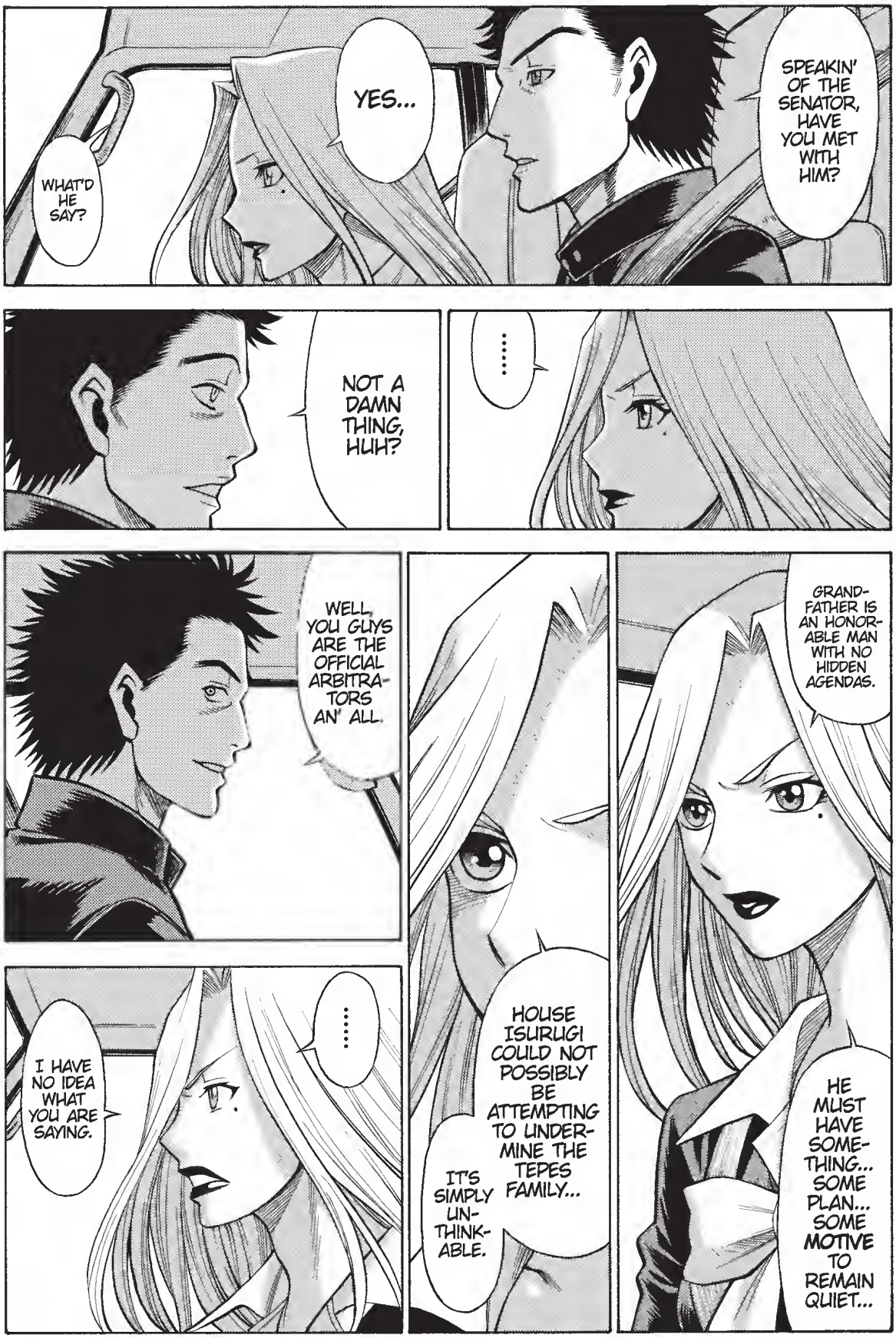

SEE FOR YOURSELF WHAT MY KINGDOM SUFFERED.
AND DON'T SPEAK TO ME OF DAMAGE.

ENEMY TRICKERY ASSAILED MY CITIZENS, TURNING BROTHER ON BROTHER. THOUSANDS PERISHED AT THEIR OWN FAMILY'S HANDS.
OUR CITY STREETS WERE STRAFED WITH BULLETS AND MISSILES.

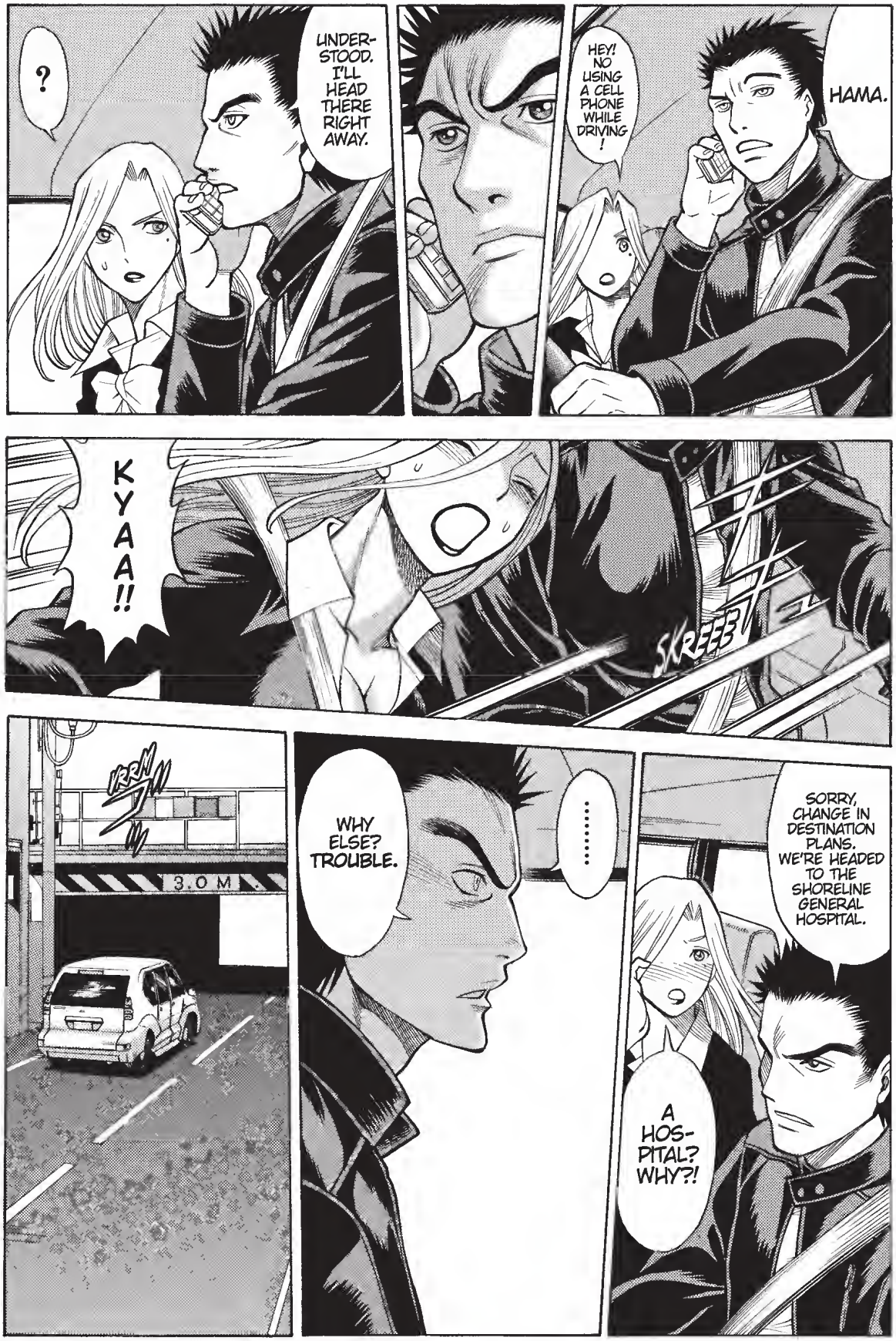

REALLY? WHAT STRANGE THINGS FOR YOU TO SAY.
AFTER ALL, HAD THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT *ACTUALLY ADHERED* TO THE PACT OF MUTUAL PROTECTION THAT BOTH OF OUR GOVERNMENTS ESTABLISHED IN GOOD FAITH, THEN NONE OF THESE THINGS WOULD HAVE HAPPENED.

THE ALLEGATIONS THAT KNOWLEDGE OF IVANOVIC'S INVASION WAS COVERED UP IS CURRENTLY UNDER INVESTIGATION.
.....
SO IF YOU HAVE COME SEEKING EXCUSES, COUNCILOR, I WOULD LOOK TO YOUR OWN. WE HAVE NO NEED OF ANY.
THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT WILLFULLY ALLOWED IVANOVIC TO INVADE MY SOVEREIGN LANDS AND WREAK THIS HAVOC. HONESTLY, I AM NOW FORCED TO WONDER WHERE YOUR ALLEGIANCES TRULY LIE.
.....
SO, YA DIDN'T GET ANY-WHERE TODAY EITHER, HUH...?
YOU MAY LEAVE.
HMPH... I EAGERLY AWAIT THE RESULTS OF THIS "INVESTIGATION." IT IS BOUND TO BE AMUSING. BUT IN ANY CASE, WE ARE DONE FOR TODAY.


HOW CAN I, WHEN I DON'T HAVE ANY INFORMATION TO WORK WITH?
OF COURSE NOT.
"SORRY, MA'AM! THE ENEMY SNUCK UP AND SKUNKED US GOOD, TOO." I MEAN, THAT'S WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED, AFTER ALL...
SO WHY NOT JUST GIVE THEM THE UNVARNISHED TRUTH?
SENATOR ISURUGI'S OFFICIAL REP, YOU MEAN.
I AM HERE AS AN OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT!
I COULD NEVER SAY THAT !!
"SKUNKED"...?
.....


SPEAKIN' OF THE SENATOR, HAVE YOU MET WITH HIM?
YES...
WHAT'D HE SAY?
.....
NOT A DAMN THING, HUH?
GRAND-FATHER IS AN HONOR-ABLE MAN WITH NO HIDDEN AGENDAS.
HE MUST HAVE SOME-THING... SOME PLAN... SOME MOTIVE TO REMAIN QUIET...
HOUSE ISURUGI COULD NOT POSSIBLY BE ATTEMPTING TO UNDER-MINE THE TEPES FAMILY...
IT'S SIMPLY UN-THINK-ABLE.
WELL, YOU GUYS ARE THE OFFICIAL ARBITRA-TORS AN' ALL.
.....
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU ARE SAYING.

THIS STATION IS ONE THAT I WILL INHERIT, SOMEDAY.
THEN YOU UNDERSTAND MY POSITION.
I'M NOT UNFAMILIAR WITH THE WAY OLD-TIME, TRADITIONAL HOUSEHOLDS WORK.
C'MON, GIVE ME SOME CREDIT HERE. I WORKED FOR ROZENMANN, Y'KNOW.
I CANNOT AFFORD TO FAIL TO MEET HIS EXPECTATIONS.
IT IS TO TRAIN ME FOR THAT DUTY THAT GRANDFATHER GAVE ME THE POST I CURRENTLY HOLD.
NO MATTER WHAT.
I MUST MEET THEM... NO, SURPASS THEM...
EH?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY--?
OOPS! HANG ON.
AFTER ALL, I'LL BE STICKING WITH YOU FOR THIS WHOLE ROLLER COASTER RIDE.
NO MATTER WHAT, HUH?
I'M COOL WITH THAT.


?
UNDER-STOOD. I'LL HEAD THERE RIGHT AWAY.
HEY! NO USING A CELL PHONE WHILE DRIVING!
HAMA.
KYAA!!
SKREEB
IRRM
3.0 M
WHY ELSE? TROUBLE.
.....
SORRY, CHANGE IN DESTINATION PLANS. WE'RE HEADED TO THE SHORELINE GENERAL HOSPITAL.
A HOS-PITAL? WHY?!

Y'KNOW, RECENTLY ...
I KINDA CAN'T HELP BUT WONDER WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO HIME-SAN.
I'M THINKING SHE'S STILL NOT RECOVERED FROM WHAT SHE... UM, WHAT HAPPENED TO NANAMI-SAN.
I MEAN, SHE SEEMS LIKE A TOTALLY DIFFERENT PERSON SOMETIMES.
AND THEN THERE'S THE FACT THAT YUZURU IS STILL MISSING. SHE MUST'VE TAKEN IT A LOT HARDER THAN I EXPECTED.
NOD
SHE HASN'T COME TO SEE YOU IN AGES EITHER, RIGHT? IT'S SO WEIRD...

FEELS GOOD, DOESN'T IT? MY MOM SWEARS BY IT.
LEMME SEE THE OTHER.
ANY-WAY, THAT HAND'S DONE.
.....
I KNOW YOU'LL GET USE OF YOUR HANDS BACK SOON...
ZZZp
FASH
FASH
Don't worry. The doctor says——

SO THE RUMOR THAT YOU CAN SHOOT INFRARED BEAMS OUT OF YOUR RIGHT EYE IS TRUE!
WHOA, COOL! SO THEY FINALLY PERFECTED THAT NEW INPUT-RECOGNITION PROGRAM THE DOCTOR CAME UP WITH, HUH?
Don't worry.
The doctor says I'm still getting better every day.
GAH! THAT'S A "YES."
FASH
?
IT'S INCREDIBLE HOW MUCH STUFF NANO-MACHINES CAN DO.
TO THINK THIS IS ALL BECAUSE OF THE PIED PIPER IN YOU...
You can see it?
OH, YEAH. WERE-WOLVES' EYES CAN DETECT LIGHT DOWN IN THE INFRARED SPECTRUM.
PI
PI
Yep! The doctor said a little focused thought could get them to emit infrared light from one of my eyes. So she designed a computer screen that could detect where on a set grid that light was hitting.
According to her, it was easy to hook that into a word processor. And ta-dah! I can talk! Somewhat.
PI

I told Hime-sama to keep it secret!
I guess I should have known better. She always tells you everything.
.....
AND NOW YOU'VE GOT ALL THE TIME YOU WANT TO WRITE YOUR NEXT BOOK.
YOU'VE STARTED IT ALREADY, RIGHT?
Oh. Well, I started it ages ago.
At least she hasn't told you about our newest secret. It's about this computer's name.
HUH...? YOU GAVE A NAME TO YOUR LAPTOP?
Yeah.
OH, RELAX. SHE HASN'T TOLD ME THAT MUCH.
JUST THAT YOU STARTED ONE.
We thought about it together...
And decided to use a name from a story we both really love...

Could you tell her to come visit me every once in a while?
REALLY... SO WHAT IS IT?
I told you, it's a secret!!
.....
LATER.
SURE. I'LL LET HER KNOW.

AND WHAT BUSINESS DO YOU HAVE?
HIME-SAN!
IF IT IS NOTHING IMPORTANT, I SUGGEST YOU COME AGAIN LATER. HER MAJESTY IS BUSY.
"BUSINESS"? WHAT, DO I NEED "OFFICIAL BUSINESS" TO COME AND SEE HIME-SAN NOW?
WHOA, HOLD ON! SINCE WHEN HAVE I NEEDED YOUR PERMISSION TO TALK TO HER IF I WANTED TO?

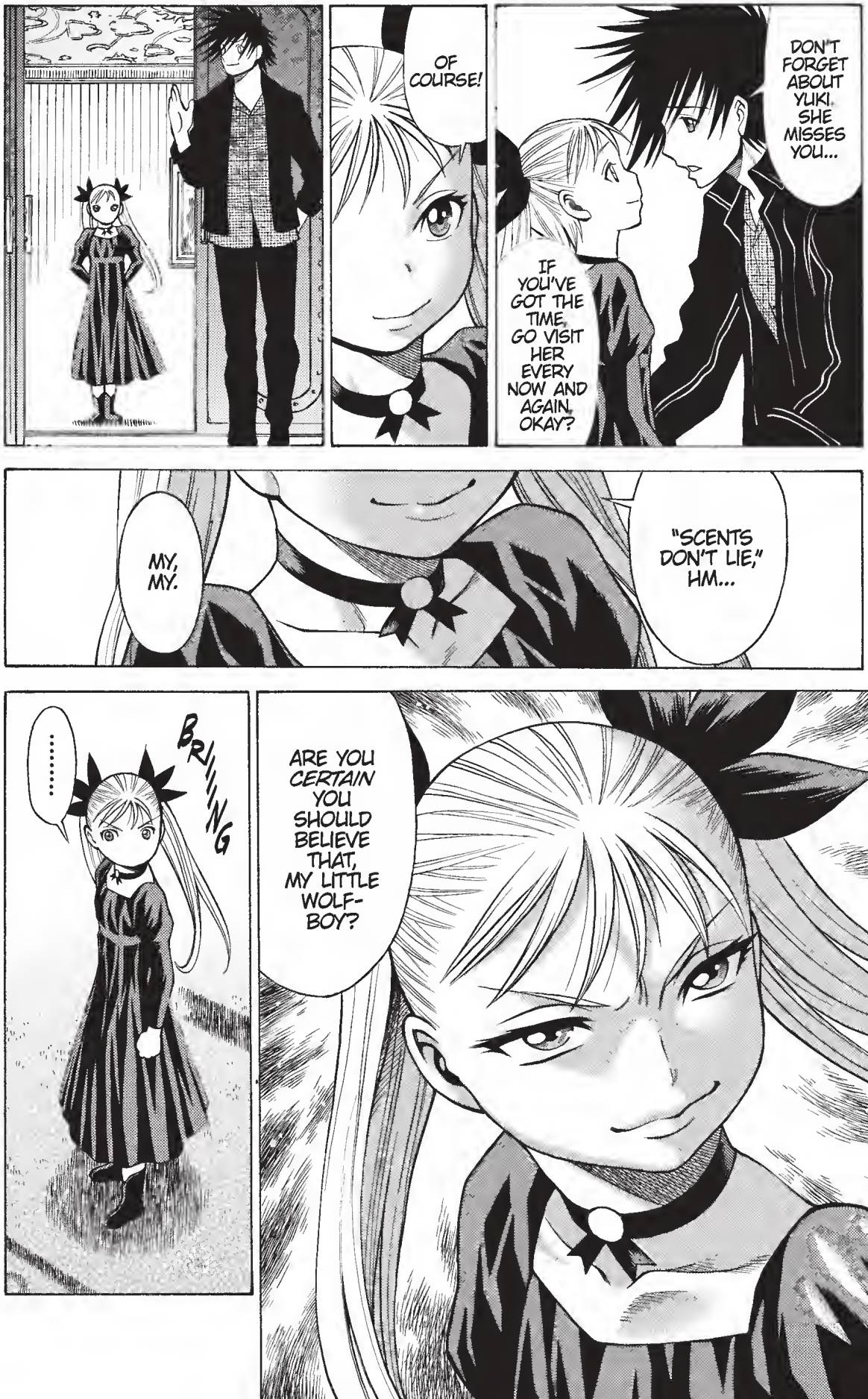
ALPHONSE, ENOUGH.
I WAS JUST THINKING THAT I'D LIKE TO SPEAK WITH AKIRA.
DON'T WORRY.
I UNDER-STAND WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO SAY.
I UNDER-STAND IT VERY WELL.
YOUR MAJ-ESTY...

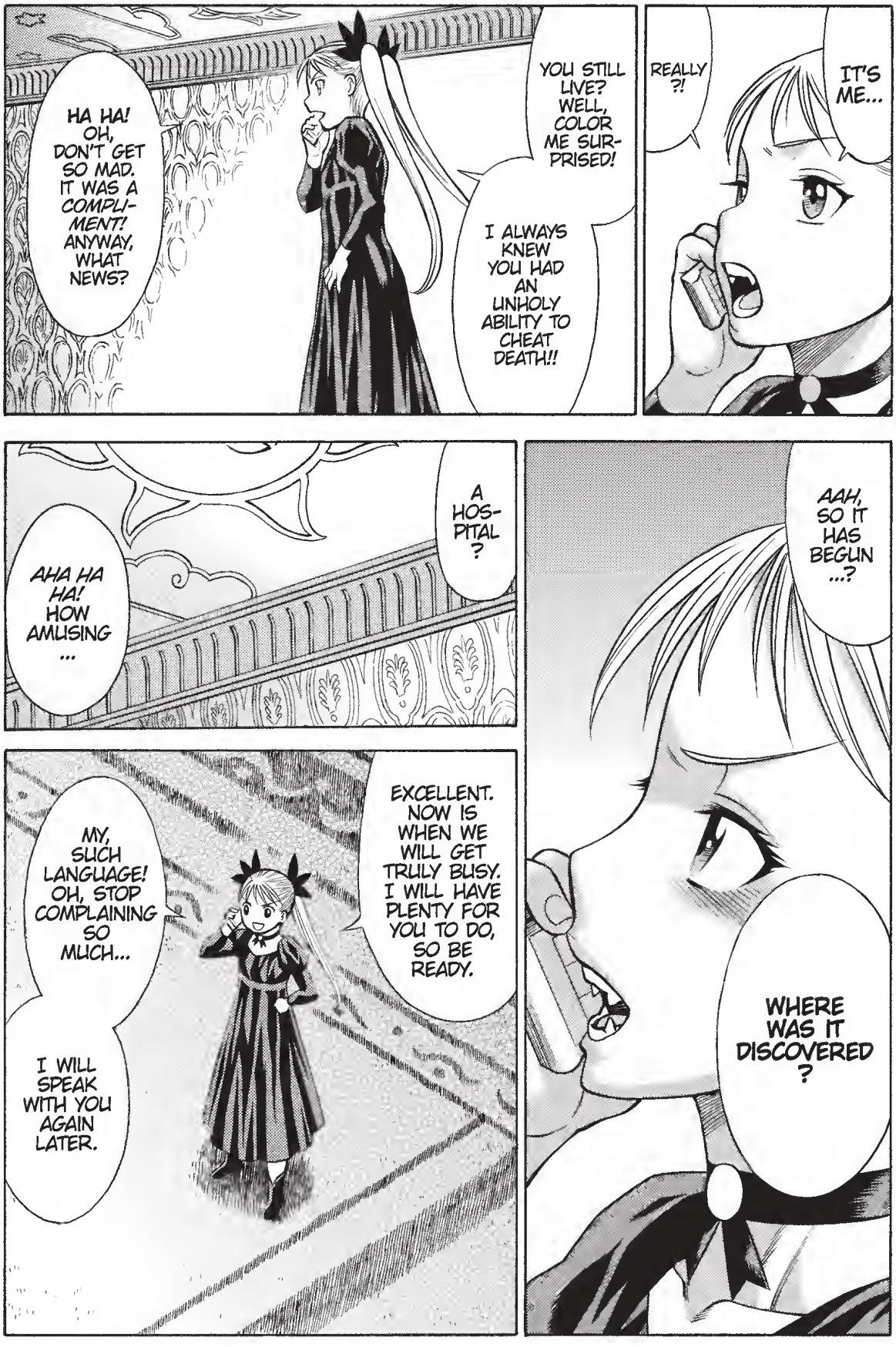
HIME-SAN...
YOU AREN'T HIDING ANYTHING FROM ME, ARE YOU?
.....
ACTUALLY, AKIRA... I AM.
WHAT ?!

I'M NOT REALLY MINA. I'M AN IMPOSTER. A FAKE CREATED TO LOOK JUST LIKE HER!
I TRADED PLACES WITH THE REAL MINA, AND SENT HER OFF INTO THE DARKNESS. SHE'S GONE NOW, AND WILL NEVER COME BACK.
QUIT IT!!
HUH?
JUST QUIT IT ALREADY! DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW WORRIED I'VE BEEN FOR YOU?
BUT NO, YOU'RE GOING TO SCREW AROUND AND COME UP WITH LAME JOKES! WELL, FINE! I KNOW BETTER NOW THAN TO SHOW I CARE!

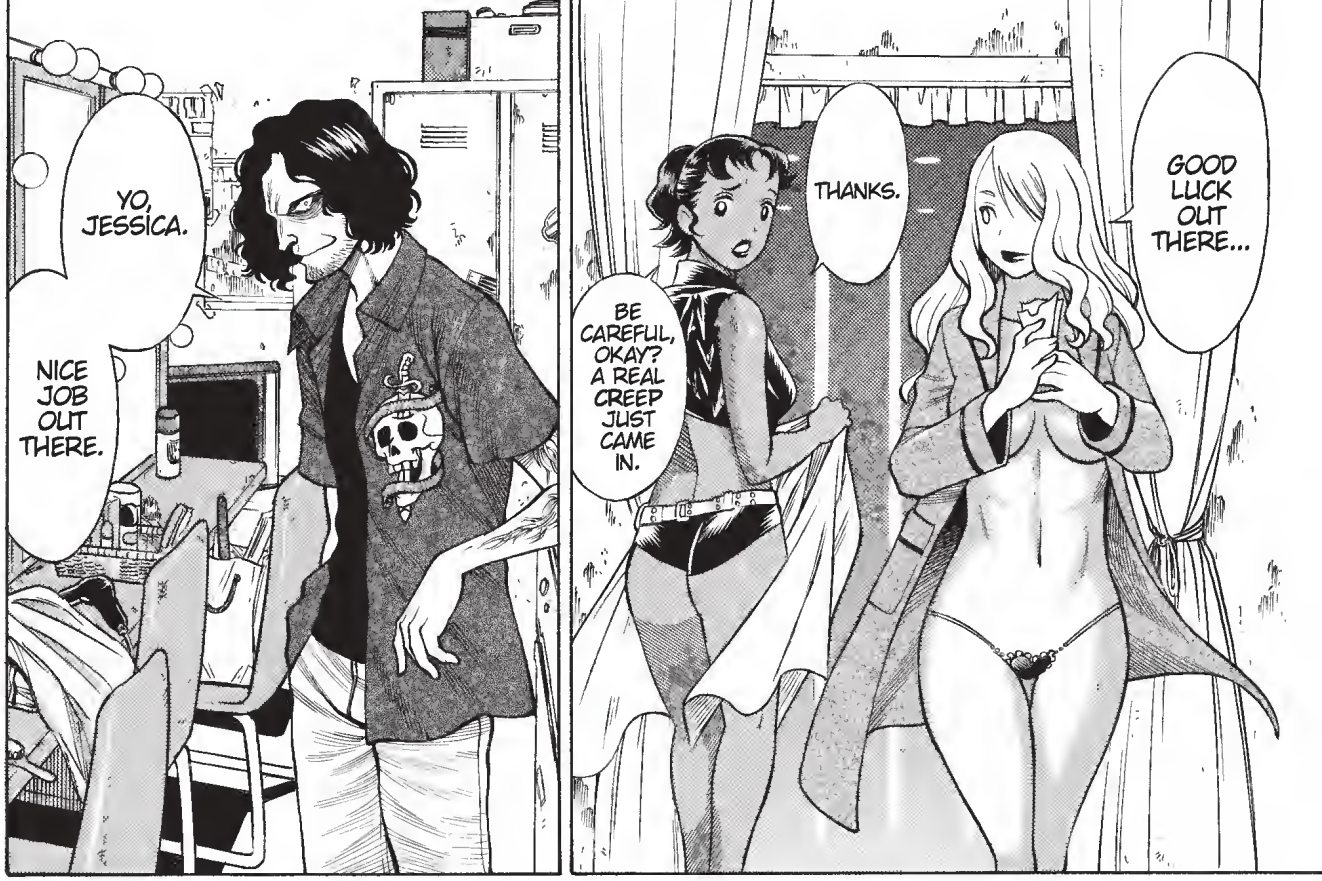
I'M A WEREWOLF, REMEMBER? DON'T DIS THE NOSE! YOU SMELL LIKE YOU ALWAYS HAVE!!
HELL NO! JUST HOW LONG DO YOU THINK WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER BY NOW?
AKIRA, WAIT!
YOU DON'T DOUBT WHO I AM? YOU DON'T BELIEVE WHAT I SAID, EVEN A TINY LITTLE BIT...?
AND SCENTS... THEY DON'T LIE!
SMIRK...
AKIRA, KNEEL DOWN FOR A MOMENT.
WHY?
OH, DO IT AL-READY.

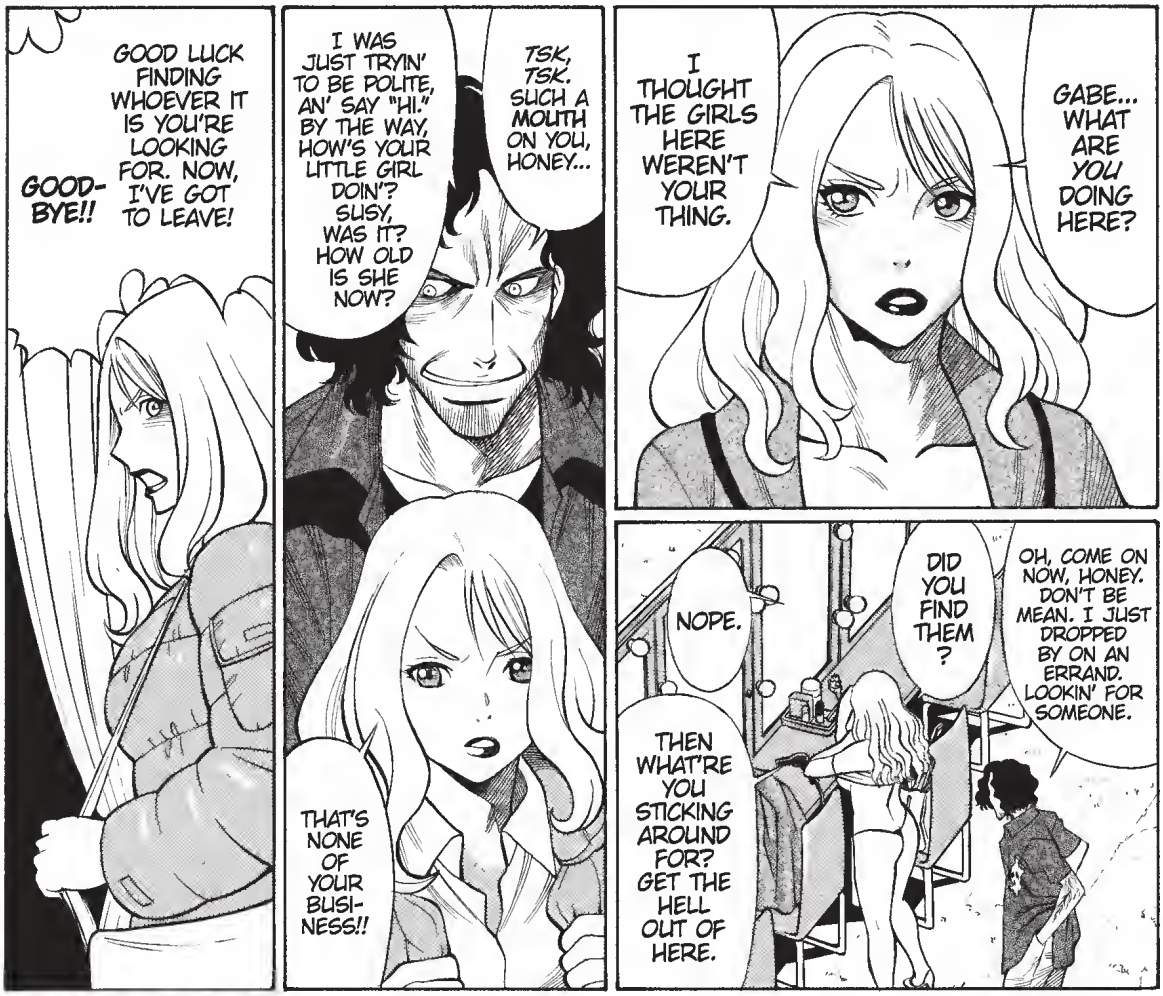
I'M SORRY.
YOU WERE SIMPLY TOO CUTE. I COULDN'T HELP BUT TEASE YOU A LITTLE.
DON'T WORRY SO MUCH FOR ME.
JUST TRUST ME. OKAY?
.....
OKAY.


DON'T FORGET ABOUT YUKI. SHE MISSES YOU...
IF YOU'VE GOT THE TIME, GO VISIT HER EVERY NOW AND AGAIN, OKAY?
OF COURSE!
"SCENTS DON'T LIE," HM...
MY, MY.
ARE YOU CERTAIN YOU SHOULD BELIEVE THAT, MY LITTLE WOLF-BOY?
BRIING
.....

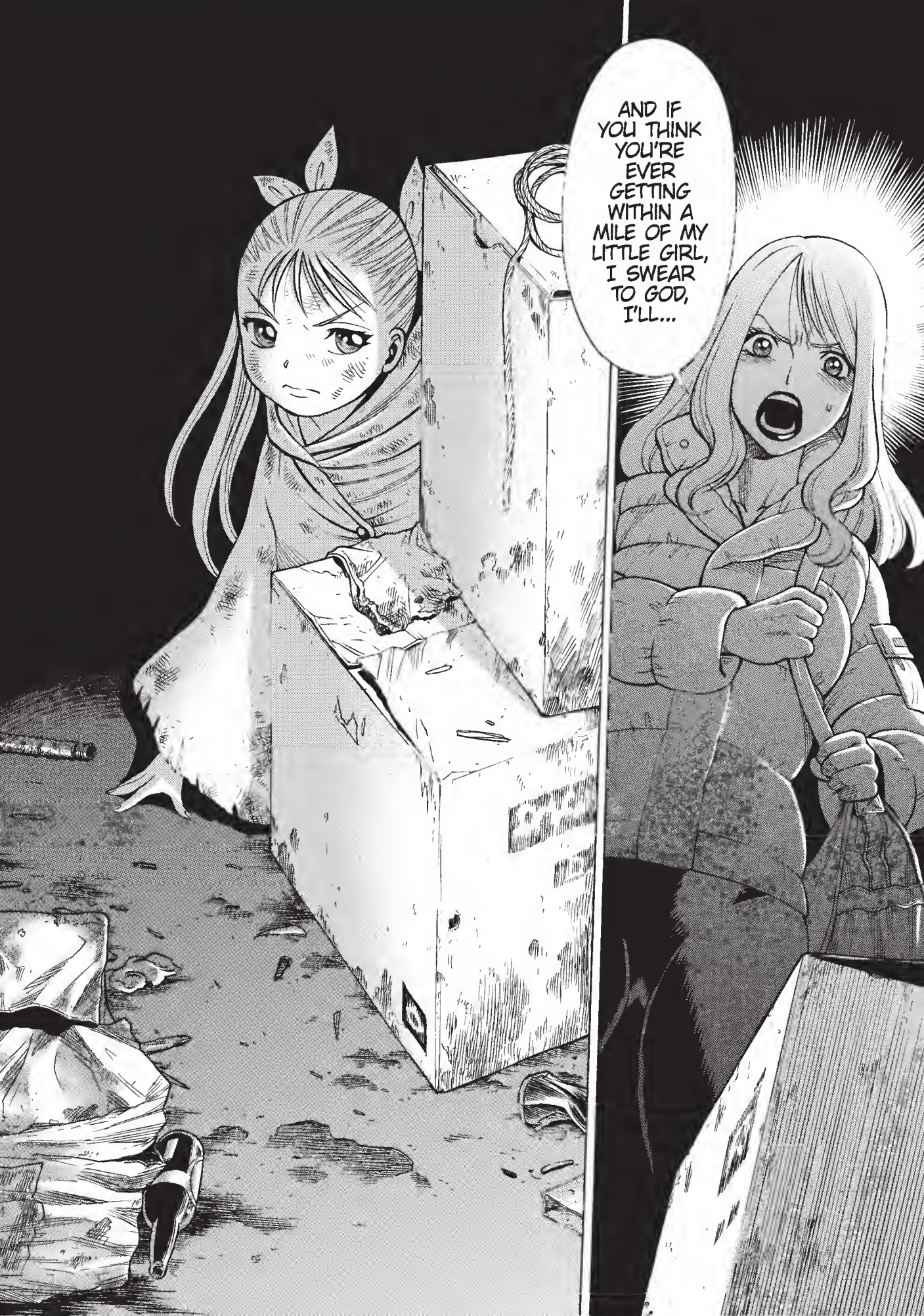

IT'S ME...
REALLY ?!
YOU STILL LIVE? WELL, COLOR ME SURPRISED!
I ALWAYS KNEW YOU HAD AN UNHOLY ABILITY TO CHEAT DEATH!!
HA HA! OH, DON'T GET SO MAD. IT WAS A COMPLIMENT! ANYWAY, WHAT NEWS?
AAH, SO IT HAS BEGUN ...?
WHERE WAS IT DISCOVERED ?
A HOSPITAL ?
AHA HA HA! HOW AMUSING ...
EXCELLENT. NOW IS WHEN WE WILL GET TRULY BUSY. I WILL HAVE PLENTY FOR YOU TO DO, SO BE READY.
MY, SUCH LANGUAGE! OH, STOP COMPLAINING SO MUCH...
I WILL SPEAK WITH YOU AGAIN LATER.

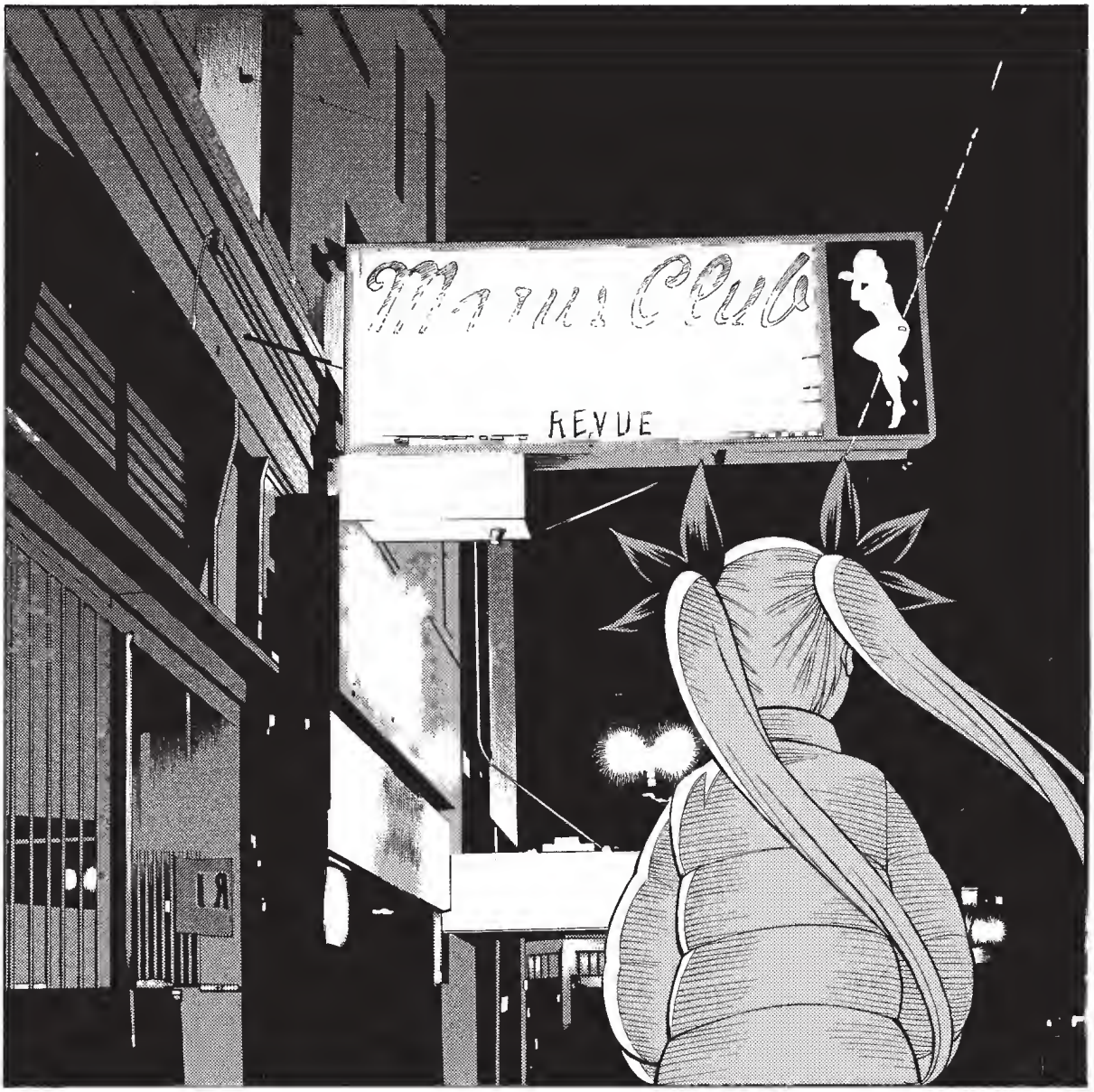
AND SO THE FIRST SPARK HAS FLOWN.
SNAP
HEH HEH HEH...
THIS WRETCHED COUNTRY!
THE WHOLE OF THIS DISGUST-ING WORLD!
EVERY-THING THAT EXISTS WILL BE BURNED TO ASH!!
BEFORE LONG, THAT TINY FLAME WILL GROW INTO A RAGING BLAZE...
AND FROM THERE, INTO AN ENORMOUS CONFLAGRATION THAT WILL CONSUME EVERYTHING IN ITS PATH!!
OH, I DO HOPE SO!!
WELL, MINA? WHAT DO YOU THINK? ARE YOU WATCHING, HELPLESSLY BOUND IN WHATEVER NAMELESS DARKNESS HOLDS YOU NOW?!


YO, JESSICA.
NICE JOB OUT THERE.
BE CAREFUL, OKAY? A REAL CREEP JUST CAME IN.
THANKS.
GOOD LUCK OUT THERE...


GOOD LUCK FINDING WHOEVER IT IS YOU'RE LOOKING FOR. NOW, I'VE GOT TO LEAVE!
GOOD-BYE!!
I WAS JUST TRYIN' TO BE POLITE, AN' SAY "HI." BY THE WAY, HOW'S YOUR LITTLE GIRL DOIN'? SUSY, WAS IT? HOW OLD IS SHE NOW?
TSK, TSK. SUCH A MOUTH ON YOU, HONEY...
THAT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSI-NESS!!
I THOUGHT THE GIRLS HERE WEREN'T YOUR THING.
GABE... WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
OH, COME ON NOW, HONEY. DON'T BE MEAN. I JUST DROPPED BY ON AN ERRAND. LOOKIN' FOR SOMEONE.
DID YOU FIND THEM?
NOPE.
THEN WHAT'RE YOU STICKING AROUND FOR? GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE.

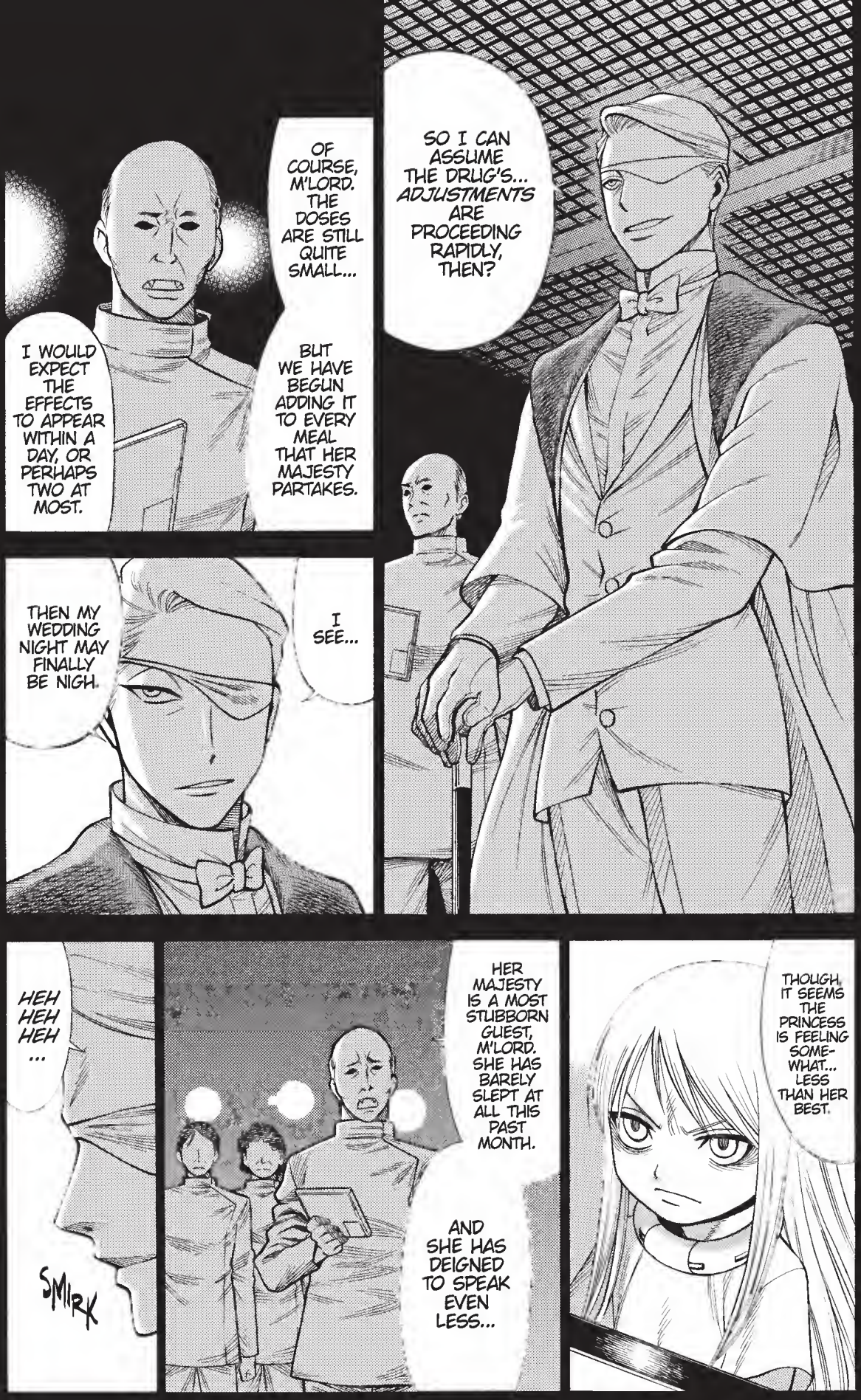
HE EVEN HAD THE NERVE TO COME UP AND ASK ME HOW OLD MY BABY SUSY WAS! I HAD A HELL OF A TIME NOT THROWING UP RIGHT ON THE SPOT!!
BUT THAT MAN IS A CERTIFIED CHILD MOLESTER! HELL, HE MAKES HIS LIVING OFF OF CHILD PORN!!
AIN'T GOT MUCH CHOICE ON THAT ONE. HIS GANG'S THE ONE THAT RUNS THIS TURF AN' ALL.
MILES! HOW COULD YOU LET THAT SLIME INTO THE "BACKYARD" ?!
SHIT!!
HEY. YOU GOT PROBLEMS WITH THE WAY WE DO THINGS HERE, YOU GO FIND ANOTHER JOB.
ASSUMIN' YOU'RE GOOD FOR ANYTHING BESIDES SHAKIN' YOUR NAKED ASS AROUND, THAT IS.
WHO'S THERE?! IS THAT YOU, GABE?!
COME OUT HERE WHERE I CAN SEE YOU, YOU SLEAZE!!
THUNK
!


AND IF YOU THINK YOU'RE EVER GETTING WITHIN A MILE OF MY LITTLE GIRL, I SWEAR TO GOD, I'LL...



Chapter 56: Like Anne Frank

TOK
TOK
HOW ARE THE EXPERIMENTS UPON THE PRINCESS PROCEEDING?
EXCEL-LENTLY, M'LORD.


SO I CAN ASSUME THE DRUG'S... ADJUSTMENTS ARE PROCEEDING RAPIDLY, THEN?
OF COURSE, M'LORD. THE DOSES ARE STILL QUITE SMALL...
BUT WE HAVE BEGUN ADDING IT TO EVERY MEAL THAT HER MAJESTY PARTAKES.
I WOULD EXPECT THE EFFECTS TO APPEAR WITHIN A DAY, OR PERHAPS TWO AT MOST.
I SEE...
THEN MY WEDDING NIGHT MAY FINALLY BE NIGH.
THOUGH, IT SEEMS THE PRINCESS IS FEELING SOME-WHAT... LESS THAN HER BEST.
HER MAJESTY IS A MOST STUBBORN GUEST, M'LORD. SHE HAS BARELY SLEPT AT ALL THIS PAST MONTH.
AND SHE HAS DEIGNED TO SPEAK EVEN LESS...
HEH HEH HEH ...
SMIRK

SHE DOES NOT SLEEP, SO AS TO PROVIDE US WITH NO MOMENT OF WEAKNESS TO EXPLOIT.
SHE DOES NOT SPEAK, SO AS TO CONSERVE EVERY LAST DROP OF HER ENERGY.
AND SHE DOES BOTH, SO AS TO BE READY FOR ANY CHANCE AT ESCAPE, NO MATTER HOW SMALL OR FLEETING...
TRULY, MY LOVELY BRIDE IS A MOST FORMI-DABLE LADY.
EVEN BOUND IN CHAINS AND CAST INTO THE HEART OF AN INESCAPABLE DUNGEON, SHE STILL HAS NOT LOST HER FANGS.
TOK
TOK
TOK
TOK
TOK
TOK
TOK
SHVR
!

BOOM
!
RMMMBL
GERHARD.
AN IN-TRUDER, M'LORD!
HE HAS MANAGED TO PENETRATE AS FAR AS THE RESEARCH LEVEL, UPON WHICH WE HAVE HOUSED HER MAJESTY!
WHAT ?!

CHUNK

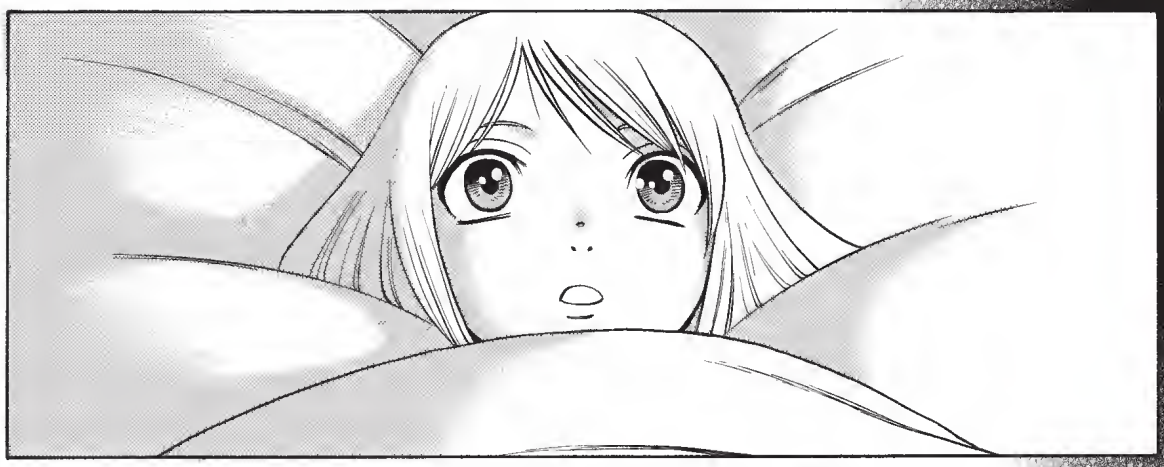
WHOOSH
THMP
KRUNCH
SHE

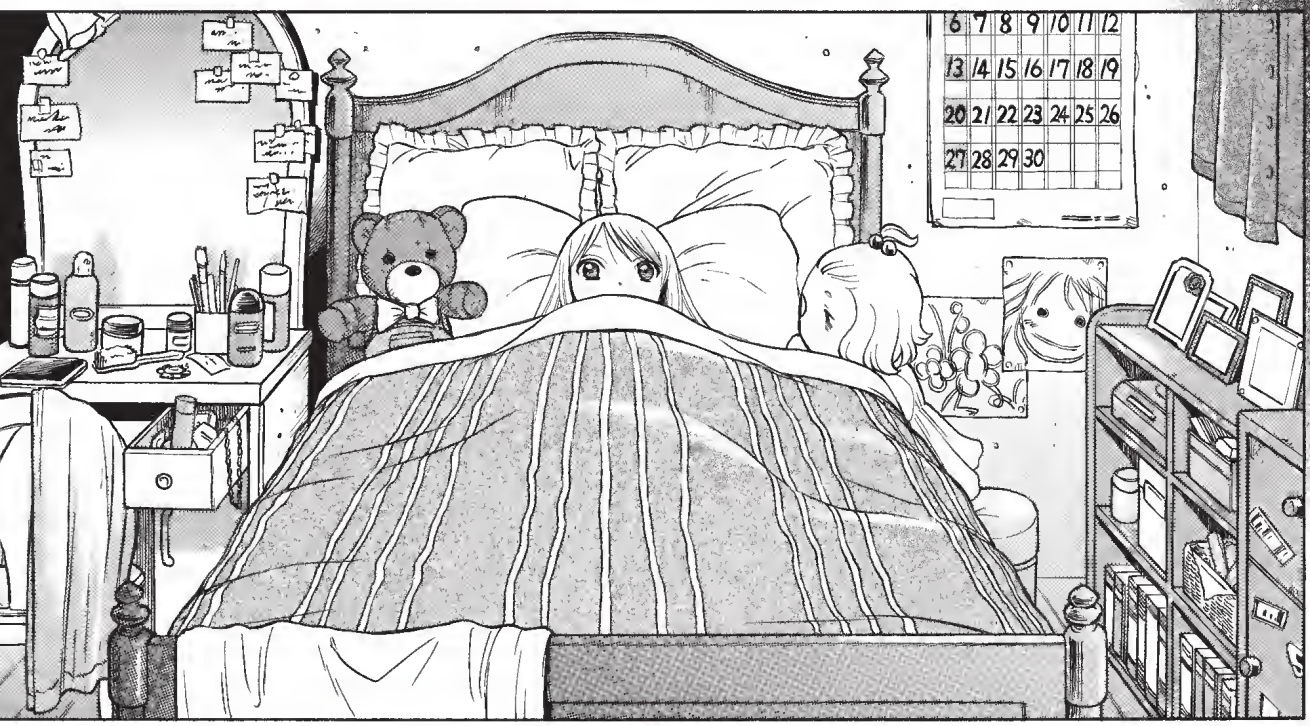
TROMP
TROMP
CHAK
CHAK
KA-SHAK
KA-SHAK
SHEK
BZZZ
SHEK

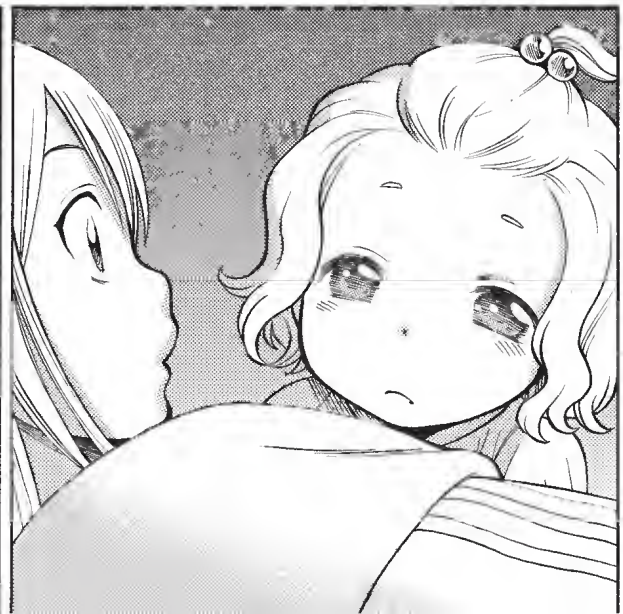
HAAH
Kaboom

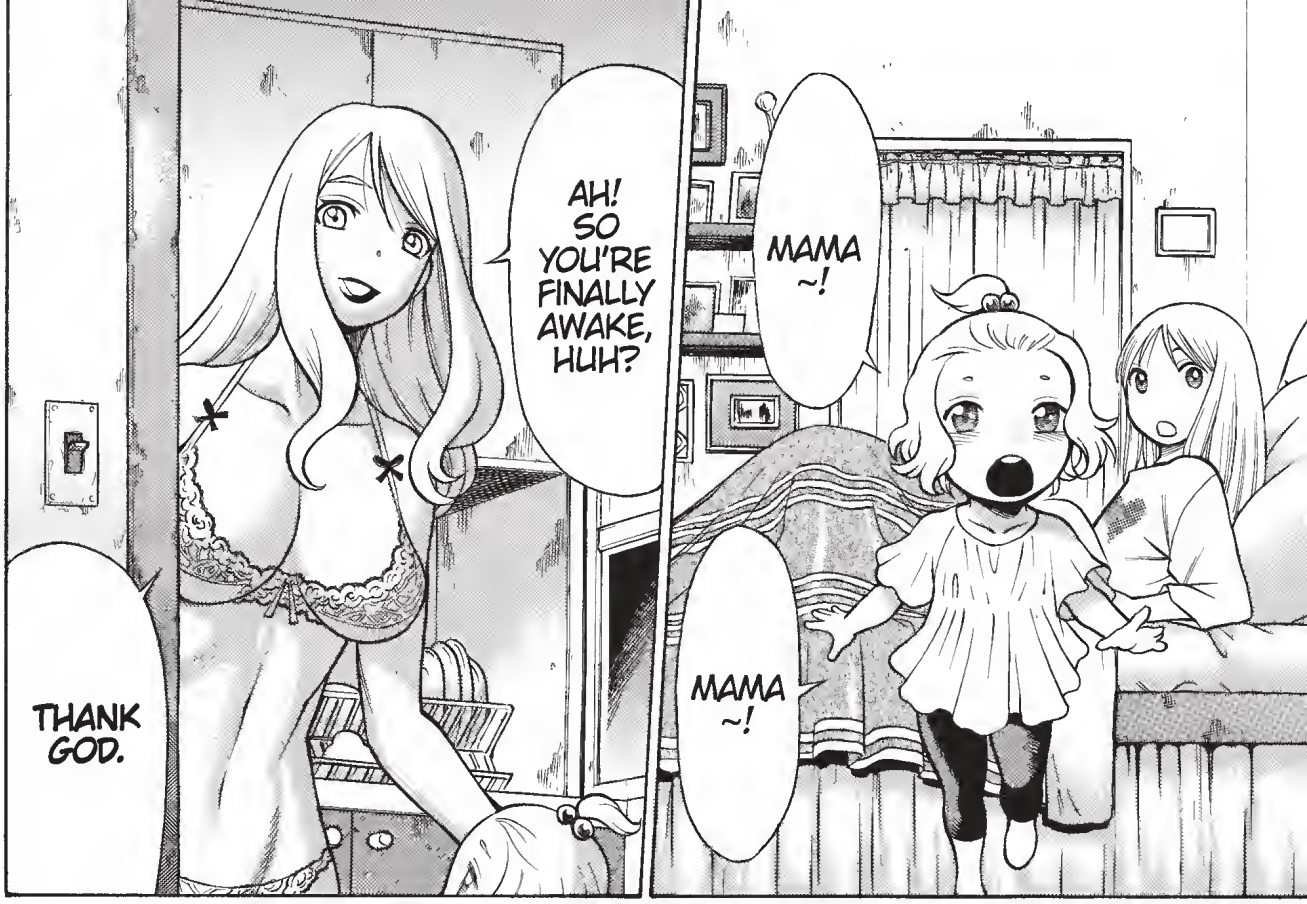
.....
I DO NOT KNOW WHO YOU ARE...
BUT IT SEEMS I OWE YOU MY GRATITUDE.
TMP

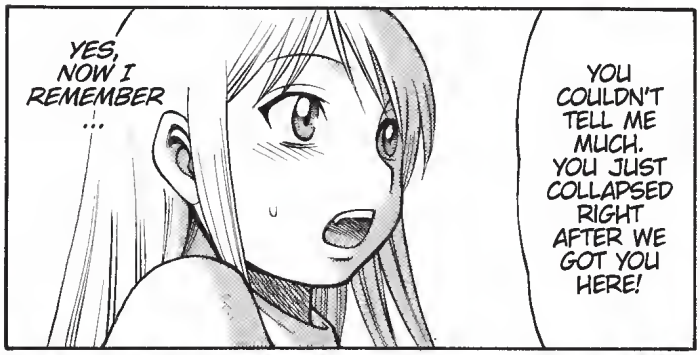
WSH

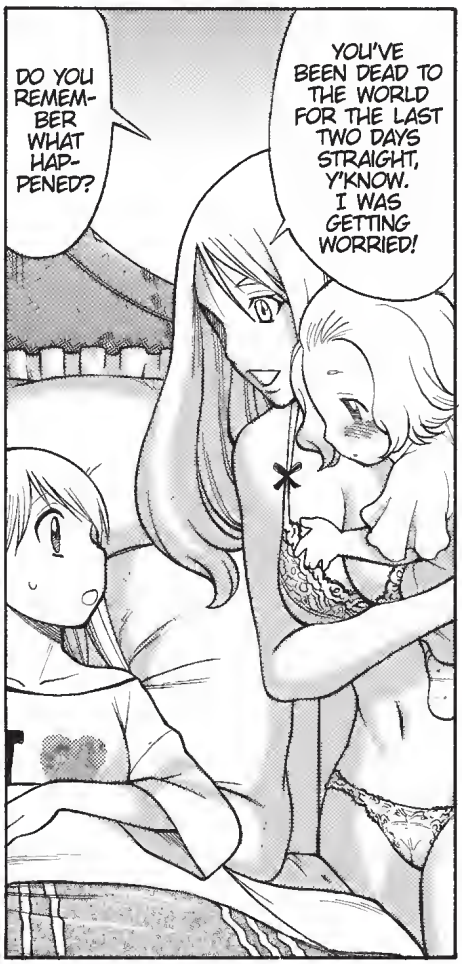


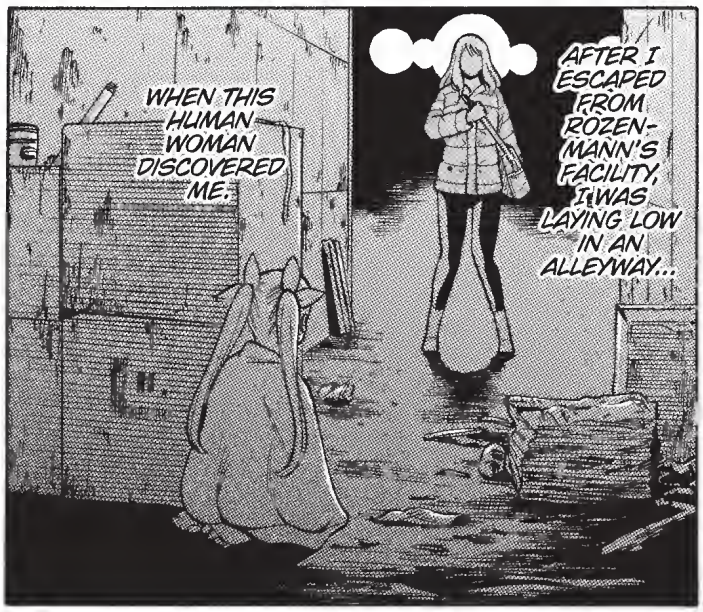

6 7 8 9 10 11 12
13 14 15 16 17 18 19
20 21 22 23 24 25 26
27 28 29 30

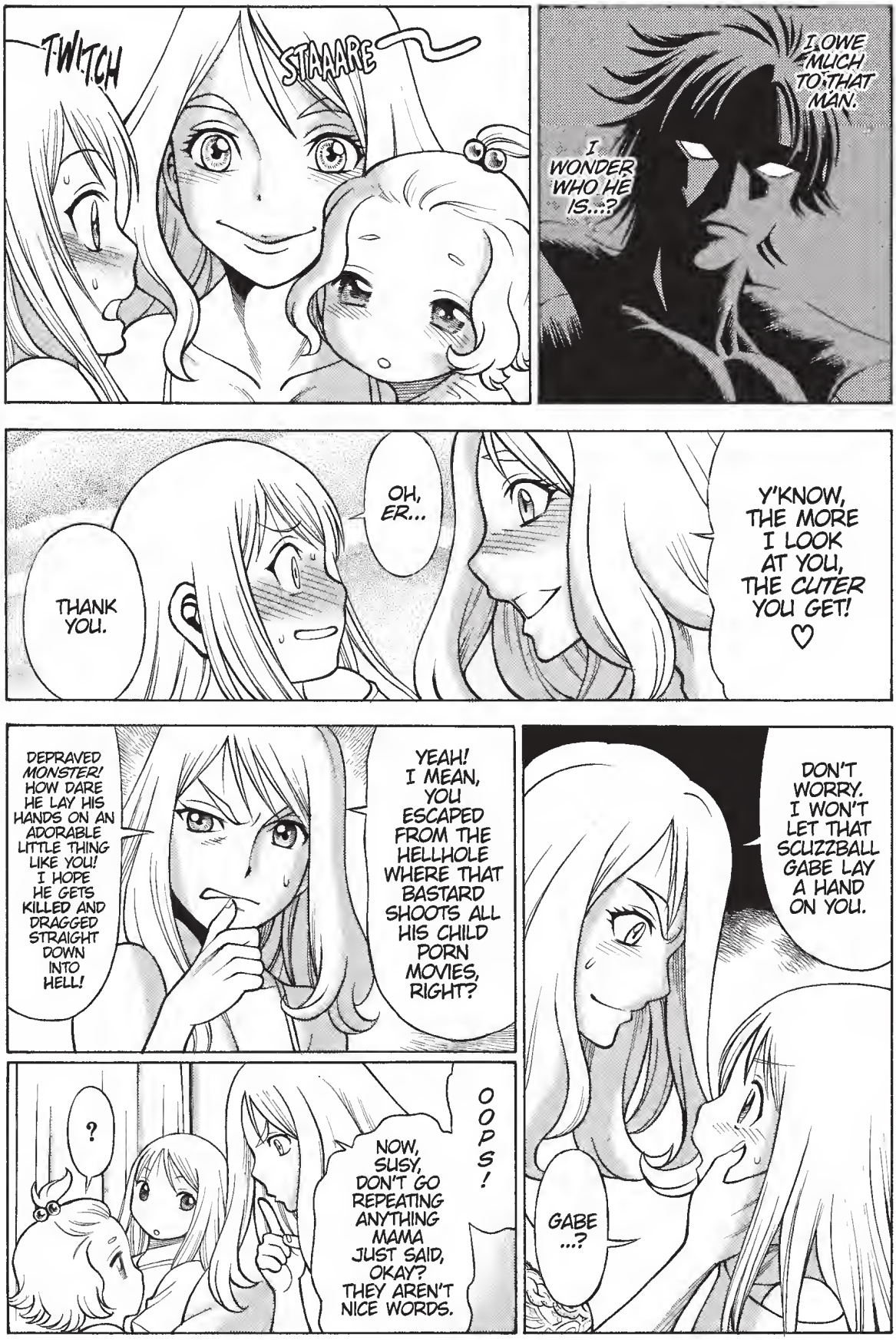


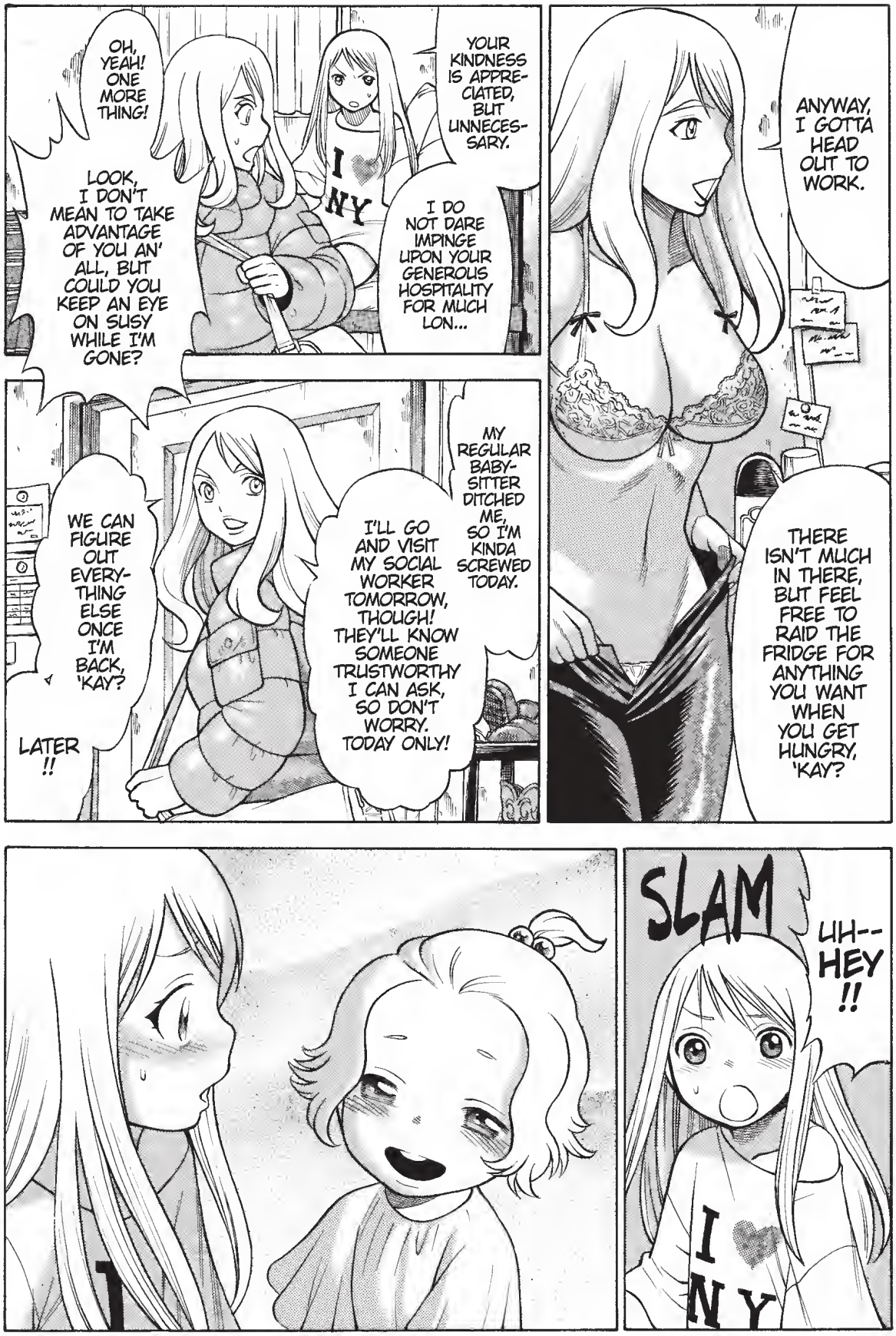

MAMA ~!
MAMA ~!
AH! SO YOU'RE FINALLY AWAKE, HUH?
THANK GOD.

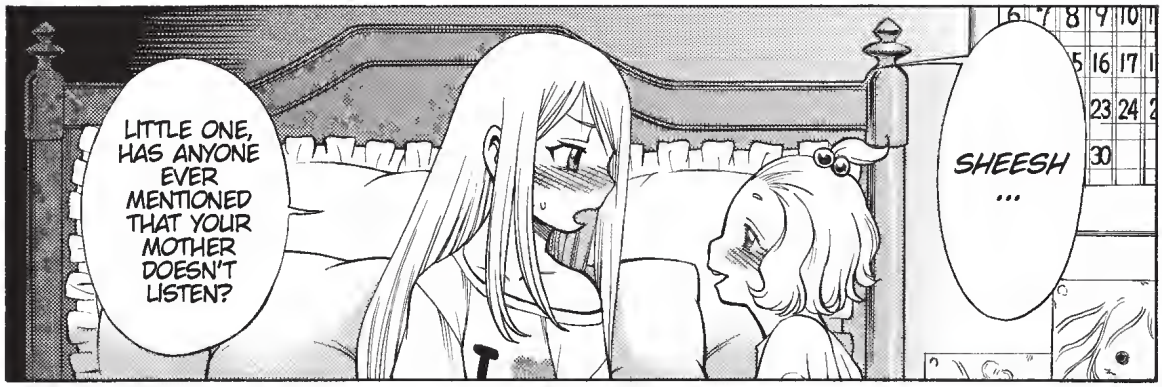

YOU COULDN'T TELL ME MUCH. YOU JUST COLLAPSED RIGHT AFTER WE GOT YOU HERE!
YES, NOW I REMEMBER ...


YOU'VE BEEN DEAD TO THE WORLD FOR THE LAST TWO DAYS STRAIGHT, Y'KNOW. I WAS GETTING WORRIED!
DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED?


AFTER I ESCAPED FROM ROZENMANN'S FACILITY, I WAS LAYING LOW IN AN ALLEYWAY...
WHEN THIS HUMAN WOMAN DISCOVERED ME,

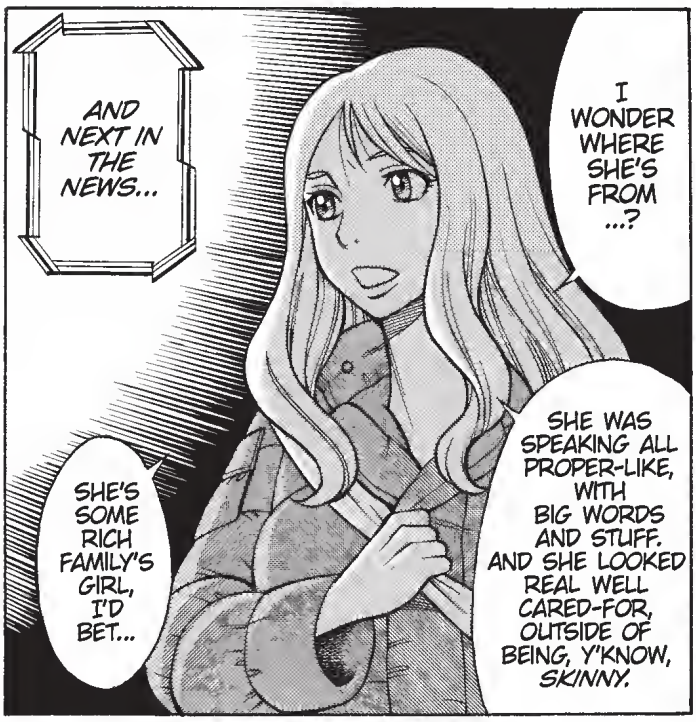

TWITCH
STAAARE
I OWE MUCH TO THAT MAN.
I WONDER WHO HE IS...?
Y'KNOW, THE MORE I LOOK AT YOU, THE CUTER YOU GET! ♡
OH, ER...
THANK YOU.
DON'T WORRY. I WON'T LET THAT SCUZZBALL GABE LAY A HAND ON YOU.
GABE ...?
YEAH! I MEAN, YOU ESCAPED FROM THE HELLHOLE WHERE THAT BASTARD SHOOTS ALL HIS CHILD PORN MOVIES, RIGHT?
DEPRAVED MONSTER! HOW DARE HE LAY HIS HANDS ON AN ADORABLE LITTLE THING LIKE YOU! I HOPE HE GETS KILLED AND DRAGGED STRAIGHT DOWN INTO HELL!
OOPS!
NOW, SUSY, DON'T GO REPEATING ANYTHING MAMA JUST SAID, OKAY? THEY AREN'T NICE WORDS.
?

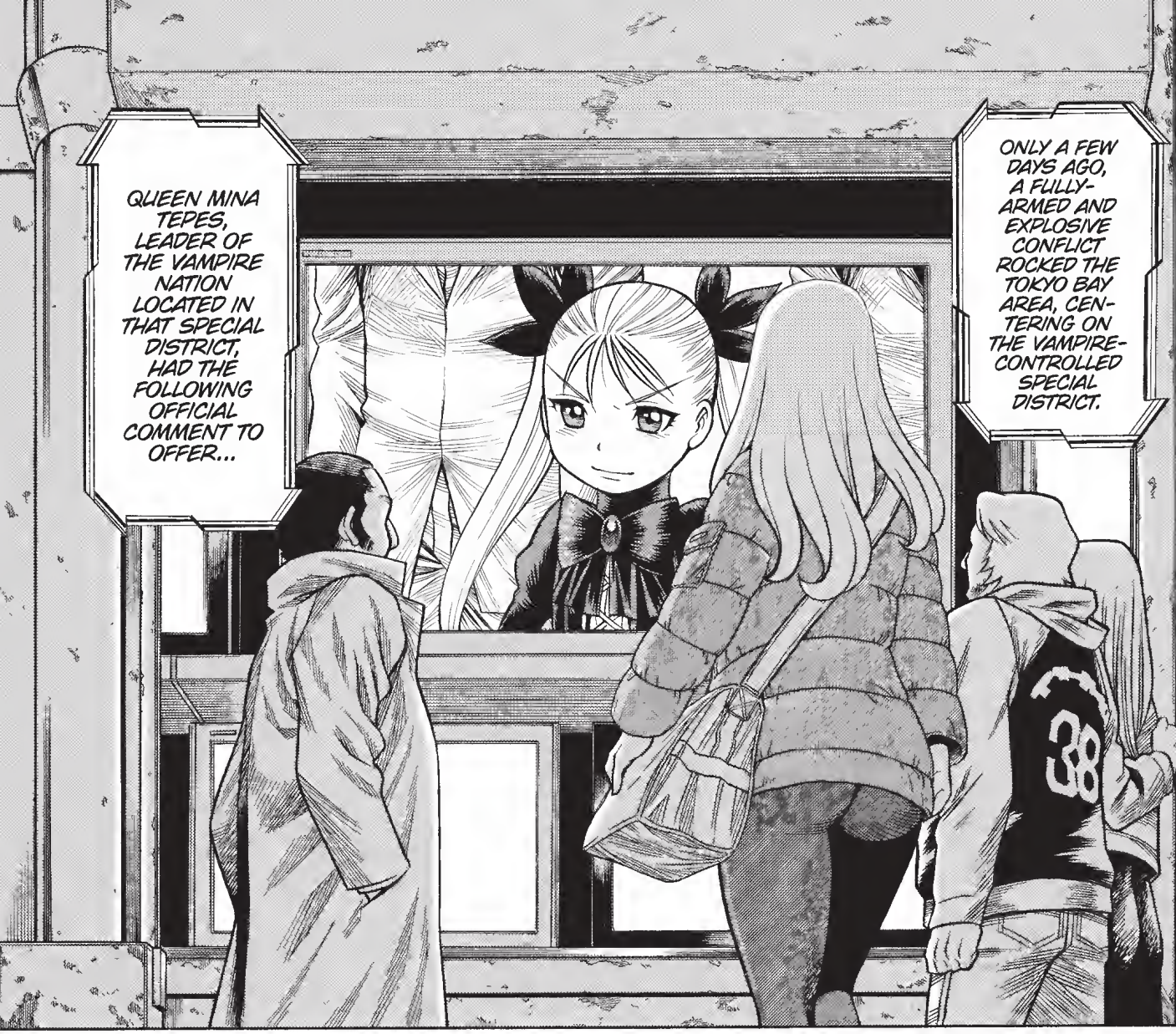

ANYWAY, I GOTTA HEAD OUT TO WORK.
THERE ISN'T MUCH IN THERE, BUT FEEL FREE TO RAID THE FRIDGE FOR ANYTHING YOU WANT WHEN YOU GET HUNGRY, 'KAY?
YOUR KINDNESS IS APPRECIATED, BUT UNNECESSARY.
I DO NOT DARE IMPINGE UPON YOUR GENEROUS HOSPITALITY FOR MUCH LON...
OH, YEAH! ONE MORE THING!
LOOK, I DON'T MEAN TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOU AN' ALL, BUT COULD YOU KEEP AN EYE ON SUSY WHILE I'M GONE?
I NY
MY REGULAR BABY-SITTER DITCHED ME, SO I'M KINDA SCREWED TODAY.
I'LL GO AND VISIT MY SOCIAL WORKER TOMORROW, THOUGH! THEY'LL KNOW SOMEONE TRUSTWORTHY I CAN ASK, SO DON'T WORRY. TODAY ONLY!
WE CAN FIGURE OUT EVERY-THING ELSE ONCE I'M BACK, 'KAY?
LATER !!
SLAM
UH-- HEY !!
I NY

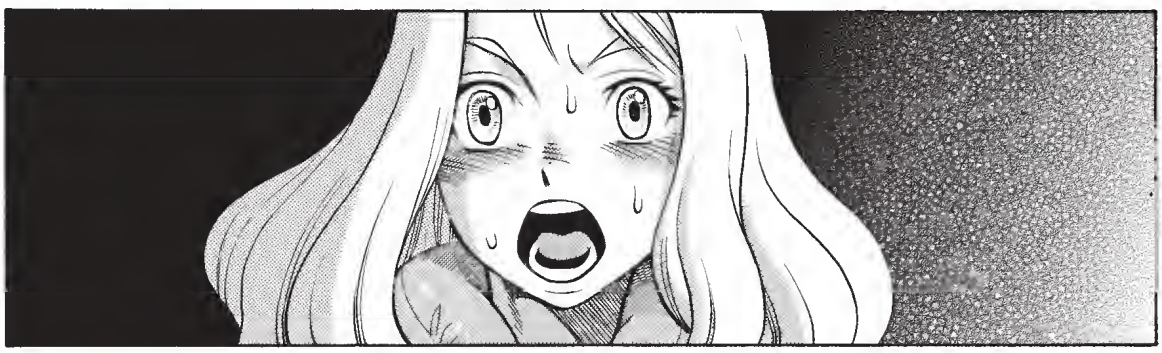

LITTLE ONE, HAS ANYONE EVER MENTIONED THAT YOUR MOTHER DOESN'T LISTEN?
SHEESH ...

OH... DAMMIT! CAN'T BELIEVE I ACTUALLY TOOK OFF WITHOUT MAKING HER ANYTHING TO EAT...
I KNOW I SAID SHE COULD HAVE WHATEVER SHE WANTED FROM THE FRIDGE, BUT I SHOULD'VE BEEN SMART ENOUGH TO HAVE SOMETHING READY WHEN SHE GOT UP!
POOR LITTLE THING LOOKED SKINNIER THAN AN ANOREXIC MOVIE STAR.

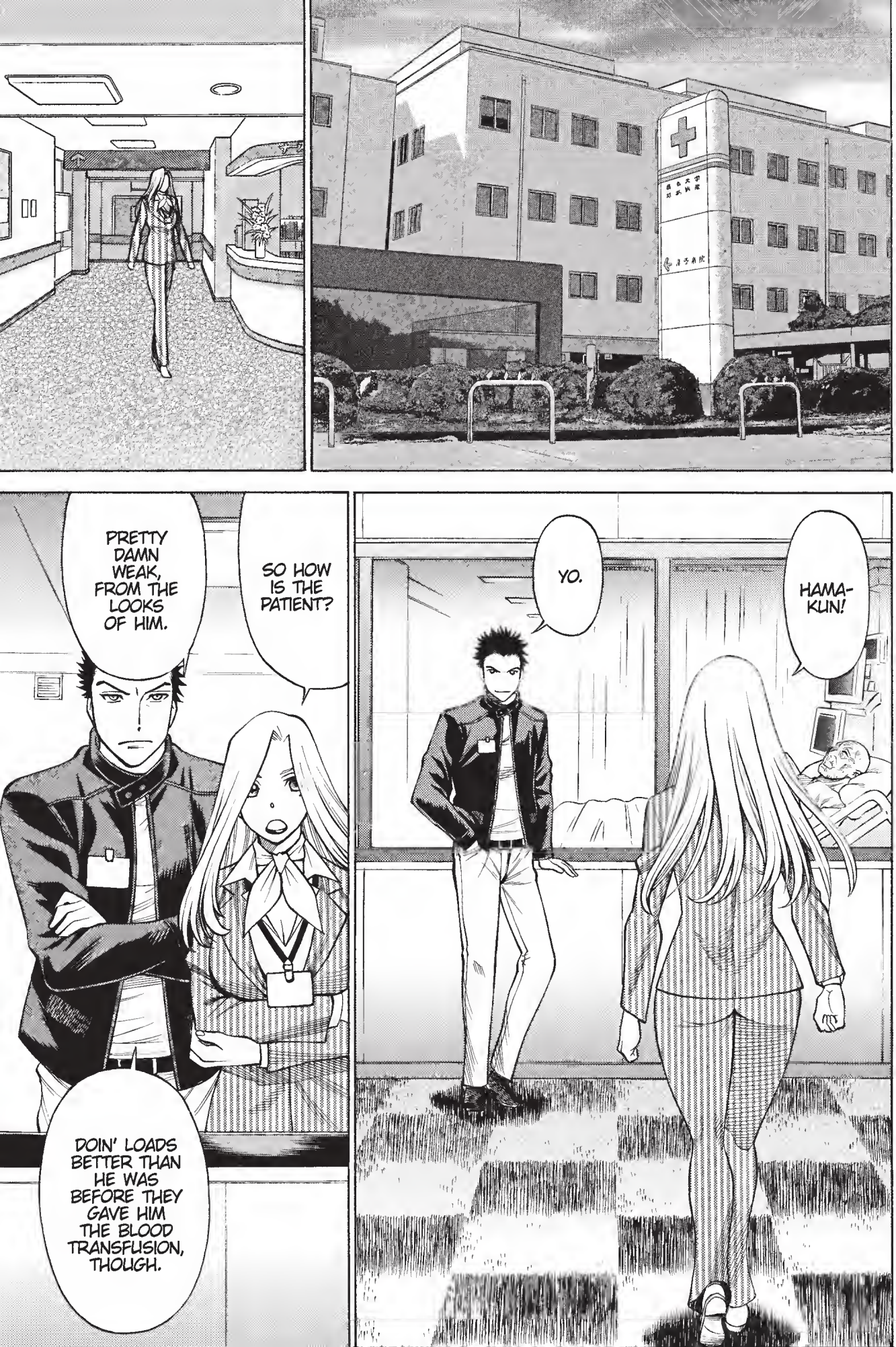
WHEW! THANK GOD SHE FINALLY WOKE UP!
IF I HAD TO GO AN' TELL MILES I NEEDED A *THIRD* DAY OFF IN A ROW, THAT TIGHTWAD WOULD TELL ME TO GO FIND ANOTHER JOB!

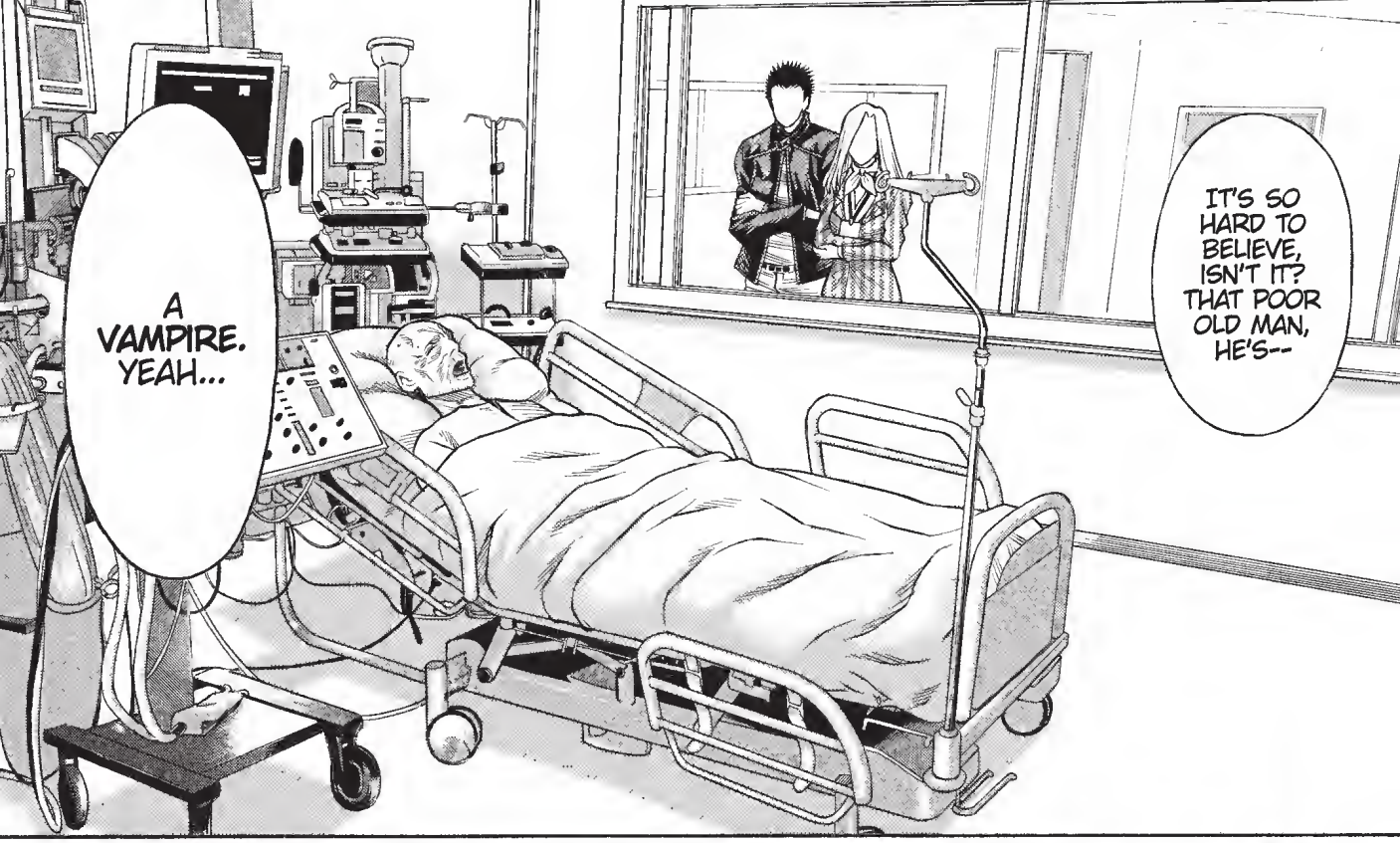

AND NEXT IN THE NEWS...
I WONDER WHERE SHE'S FROM ...?
SHE WAS SPEAKING ALL PROPER-LIKE, WITH BIG WORDS AND STUFF. AND SHE LOOKED REAL WELL CARED-FOR, OUTSIDE OF BEING, Y'KNOW, *SKINNY.*
SHE'S SOME RICH FAMILY'S GIRL, I'D BET...


QUEEN MINA TEPES, LEADER OF THE VAMPIRE NATION LOCATED IN THAT SPECIAL DISTRICT, HAD THE FOLLOWING OFFICIAL COMMENT TO OFFER...
ONLY A FEW DAYS AGO, A FULLY-ARMED AND EXPLOSIVE CONFLICT ROCKED THE TOKYO BAY AREA, CENTERING ON THE VAMPIRE-CONTROLLED SPECIAL DISTRICT.

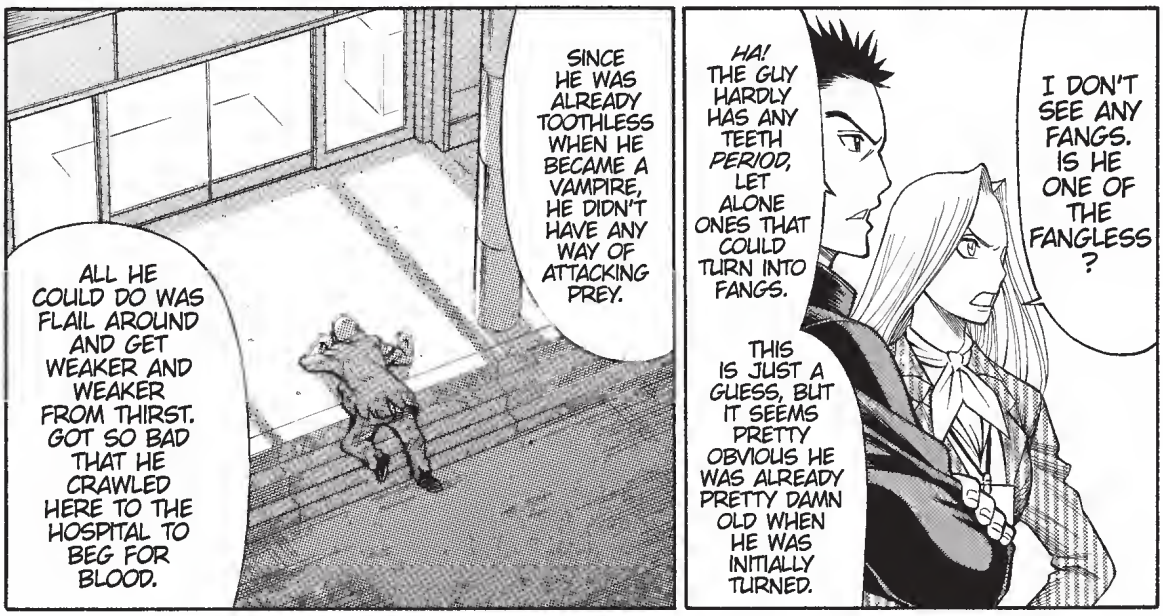


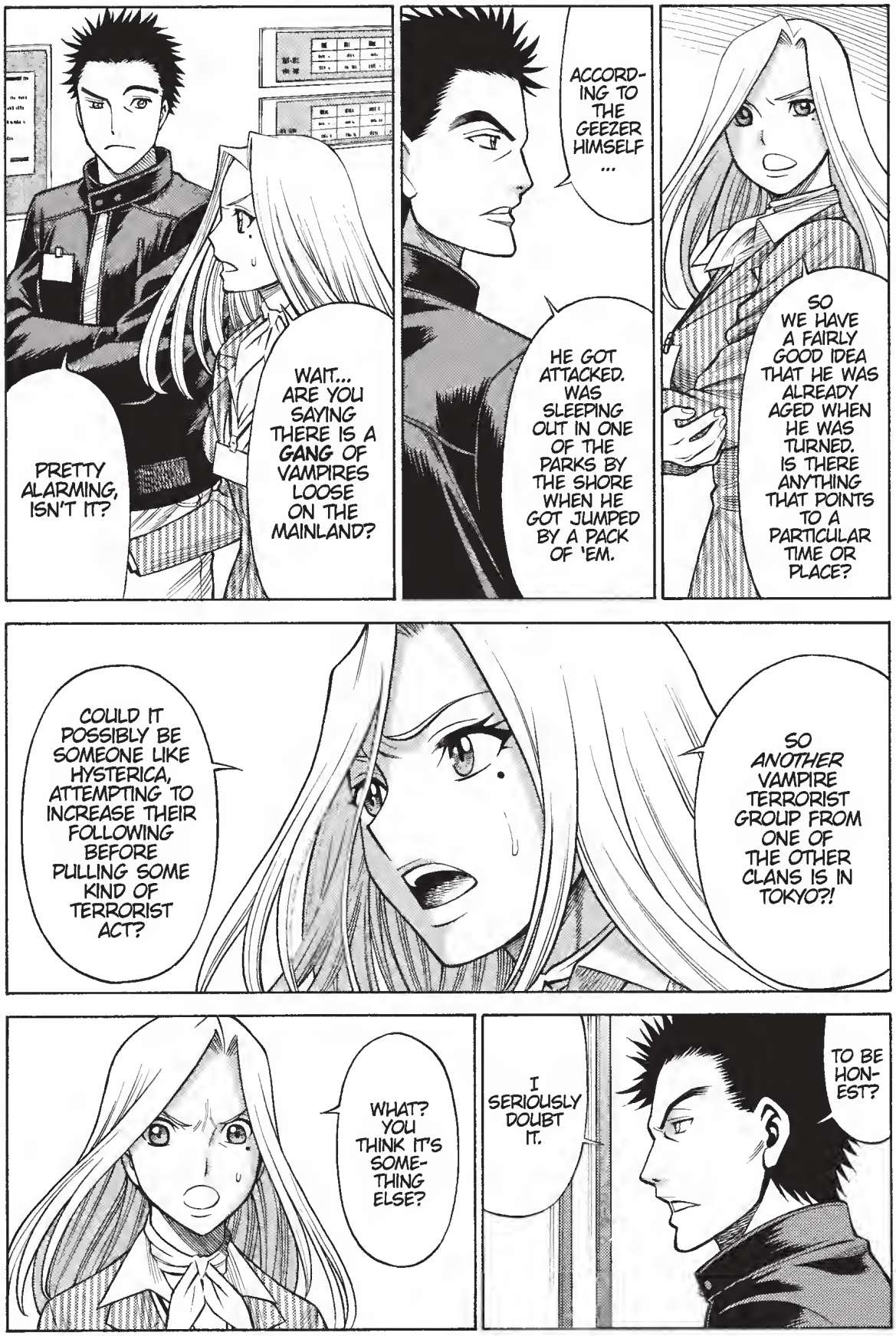
YOU'RE KIDDING ME!!


HAMA-KUN!
YO.
SO HOW IS THE PATIENT?
PRETTY DAMN WEAK, FROM THE LOOKS OF HIM.
DOIN' LOADS BETTER THAN HE WAS BEFORE THEY GAVE HIM THE BLOOD TRANSFUSION, THOUGH.


IT'S SO HARD TO BELIEVE, ISN'T IT? THAT POOR OLD MAN, HE'S--
A VAMPIRE. YEAH...

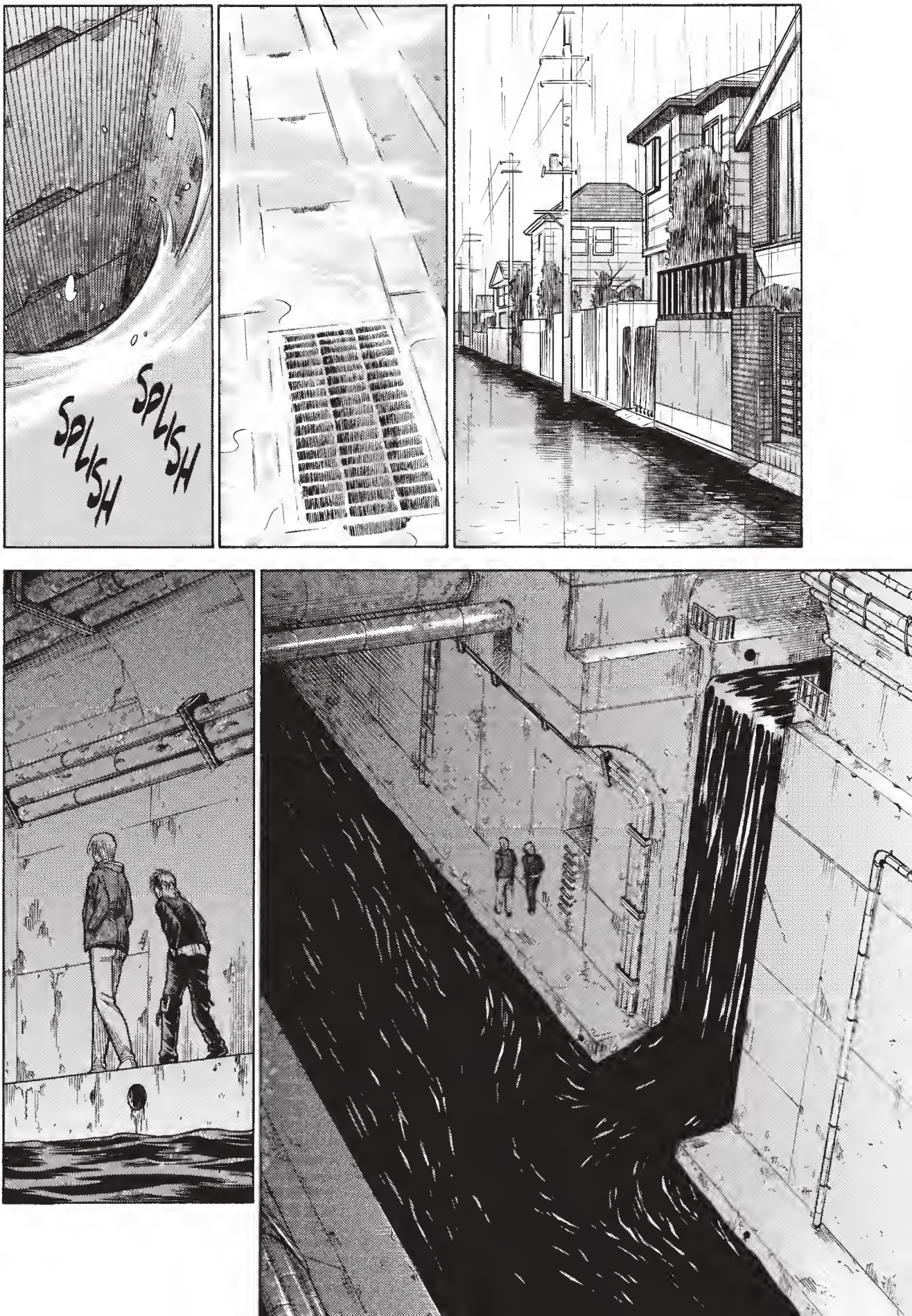
AT FIRST GLANCE, THAT OLD GEEZER ISN'T MUCH MORE THAN SOME OLD HOMELESS BUM.
AROUND HERE, THE ONLY VAMPIRES YOU'LL USUALLY SEE ARE THOSE THAT LIVE OVER THERE IN THE BUND. YOUNG. ATHLETIC. *ACTIVE.*


I DON'T SEE ANY FANGS. IS HE ONE OF THE FANGLESS?
HA! THE GUY HARDLY HAS ANY TEETH *PERIOD*, LET ALONE ONES THAT COULD TURN INTO FANGS.
THIS IS JUST A GUESS, BUT IT SEEMS PRETTY OBVIOUS HE WAS ALREADY PRETTY DAMN OLD WHEN HE WAS INITIALLY TURNED.
SINCE HE WAS ALREADY TOOTHLESS WHEN HE BECAME A VAMPIRE, HE DIDN'T HAVE ANY WAY OF ATTACKING PREY.
ALL HE COULD DO WAS FLAIL AROUND AND GET WEAKER AND WEAKER FROM THIRST. GOT SO BAD THAT HE CRAWLED HERE TO THE HOSPITAL TO BEG FOR BLOOD.


SO WE HAVE A FAIRLY GOOD IDEA THAT HE WAS ALREADY AGED WHEN HE WAS TURNED. IS THERE ANYTHING THAT POINTS TO A PARTICULAR TIME OR PLACE?
ACCORD-ING TO THE GEEZER HIMSELF ...
HE GOT ATTACKED. WAS SLEEPING OUT IN ONE OF THE PARKS BY THE SHORE WHEN HE GOT JUMPED BY A PACK OF 'EM.
WAIT... ARE YOU SAYING THERE IS A GANG OF VAMPIRES LOOSE ON THE MAINLAND?
PRETTY ALARMING, ISN'T IT?
SO ANOTHER VAMPIRE TERRORIST GROUP FROM ONE OF THE OTHER CLANS IS IN TOKYO?!
COULD IT POSSIBLY BE SOMEONE LIKE HYSTERICA, ATTEMPTING TO INCREASE THEIR FOLLOWING BEFORE PULLING SOME KIND OF TERRORIST ACT?
TO BE HON-EST?
I SERIOUSLY DOUBT IT.
WHAT? YOU THINK IT'S SOME-THING ELSE?

THAT POOR GUY COULDN'T EVEN FEED HIMSELF, LET ALONE GO OUT AND TURN MORE SOLDIERS.
HE'S STRATE-GICALLY WORTH-LESS.
AH...
GOTTA BE. I MEAN, LOOK AT HIM. IF SOME TERRORIST FACTION IS HERE, LOOKIN' TO CONSCRIPT SOME NEW RECRUITS, THEY'RE GONNA GO AFTER THE YOUNG AND ATHLETIC, NOT SOME TOOTHLESS CODGER.
THEY AREN'T ORGANIZED, AND THEY DON'T HAVE ANY OBJECTIVE OUTSIDE OF SIMPLE SURVIVAL. THEY HIT WHAT THEY WANT, WHEN THEY WANT IT.
TRUTH BE TOLD, I REALLY WISH IT *WAS* A TERRORIST GROUP WE WERE DEALING WITH. THEY'D BE A HELLUVA LOT LESS OF A PAIN IN THE ASS THAN WHAT IS HIDING OUT THERE, SOMEWHERE.
THEN WHO ATTACKED HIM?!
PROBABLY SOME GROUP OF PLAIN OLD, REGULAR VAMPIRES, OUT LOOKING FOR AN EASY MARK...

BUT WHERE WOULD A GROUP LIKE THAT HAVE COME FROM? HOW DID THEY GET INSIDE TOKYO ...
AH
NO...
OH GOD ...
THIS CAN'T BE HAPPEN-ING...
PLIP
PLIP
PLIP


SPLISH
SPLISH

WHERE'D YOU TWO GET OFF TO?
HEY.
TWITCH
NO-WHERE ...
LEAVE OFF, MAN.
YOU DIDN'T! TELL ME YOU DIDN'T !!
HEY! THAT'S BLOOD ON YOUR SHIRT!!
GYA!

YOU GOTTA KNOW WHAT I'M TALKIN' ABOUT, RIGHT?!
I CAN'T HELP IT, MAN! I GET THIRSTY! DAMN THIRSTY !!
HOW MANY TIMES DO WE GOTTA TELL YOU TO QUIT IT?!
YOU DID! YOU WENT OUT AND ATTACKED SOME HELPLESS PERSON!!
AND WE ALL JUST GOTTA ACCEPT IT! I MEAN...
WE NEED BLOOD. IT'S A FACT OF LIFE NOW...
SHUT IT! DON'T GO DOWN THAT ROAD WITH ME, MAN!
DUDE, WAKE UP ALREADY! WE CAN'T AFFORD NICETIES LIKE THAT NO MORE!
SO?! NO MEANS NO, MAN!
ARE YOU TWO ARGUING AGAIN?
WHAT'S GOING ON?
WE'RE ALL VAM-PIRES NOW!!

RING
RING

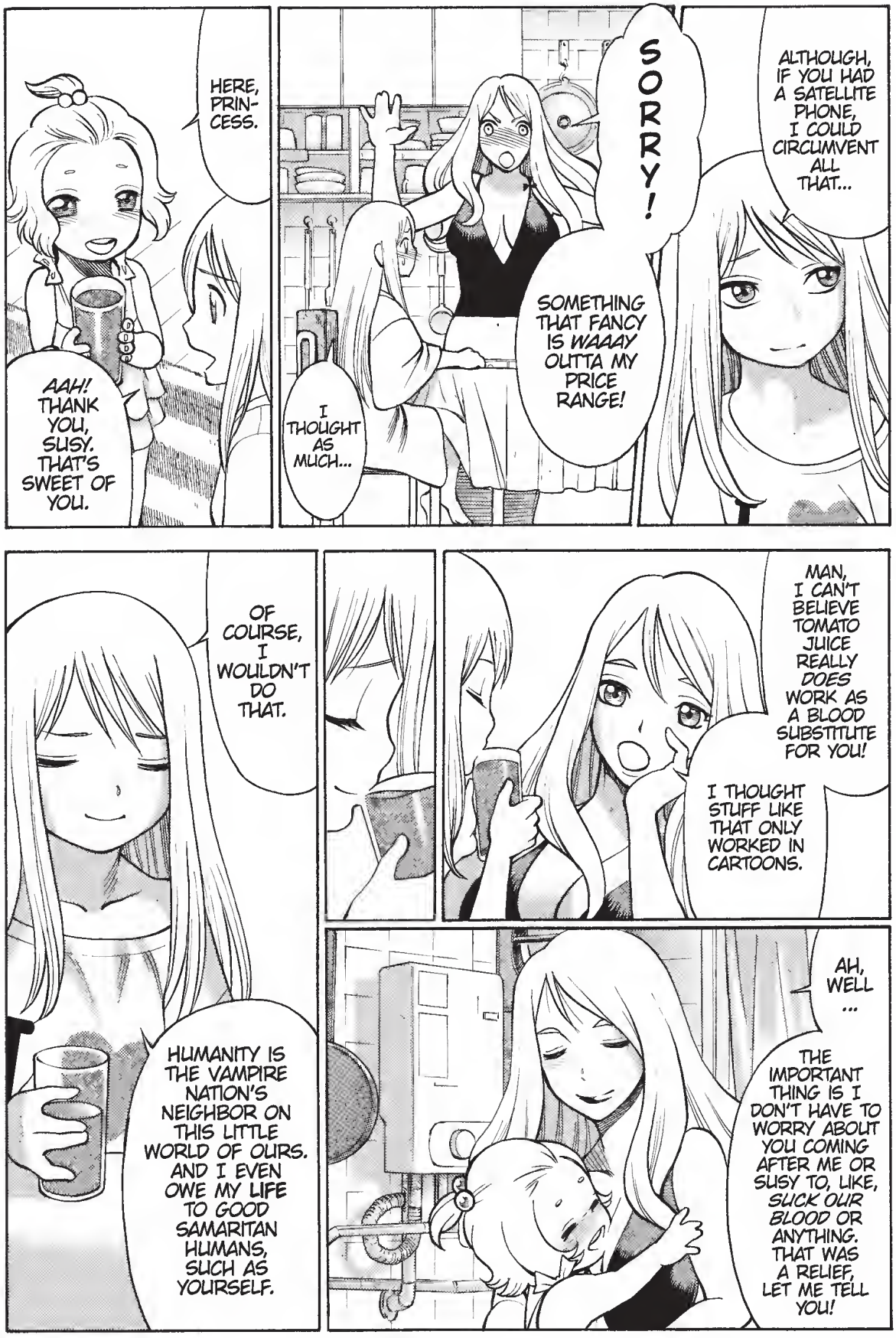
AAH, SIR ISURUGI.
YES, QUITE WELL. THANK YOU.
SO HAS MY GIFT REACHED YOU?
YES.
I WILL MAKE VERY GOOD USE OF IT, YOU CAN BE ASSURED.
YES.
YES.
OF COURSE. I WISH YOU HEALTH AND LONG LIFE, YOUR MAJESTY.

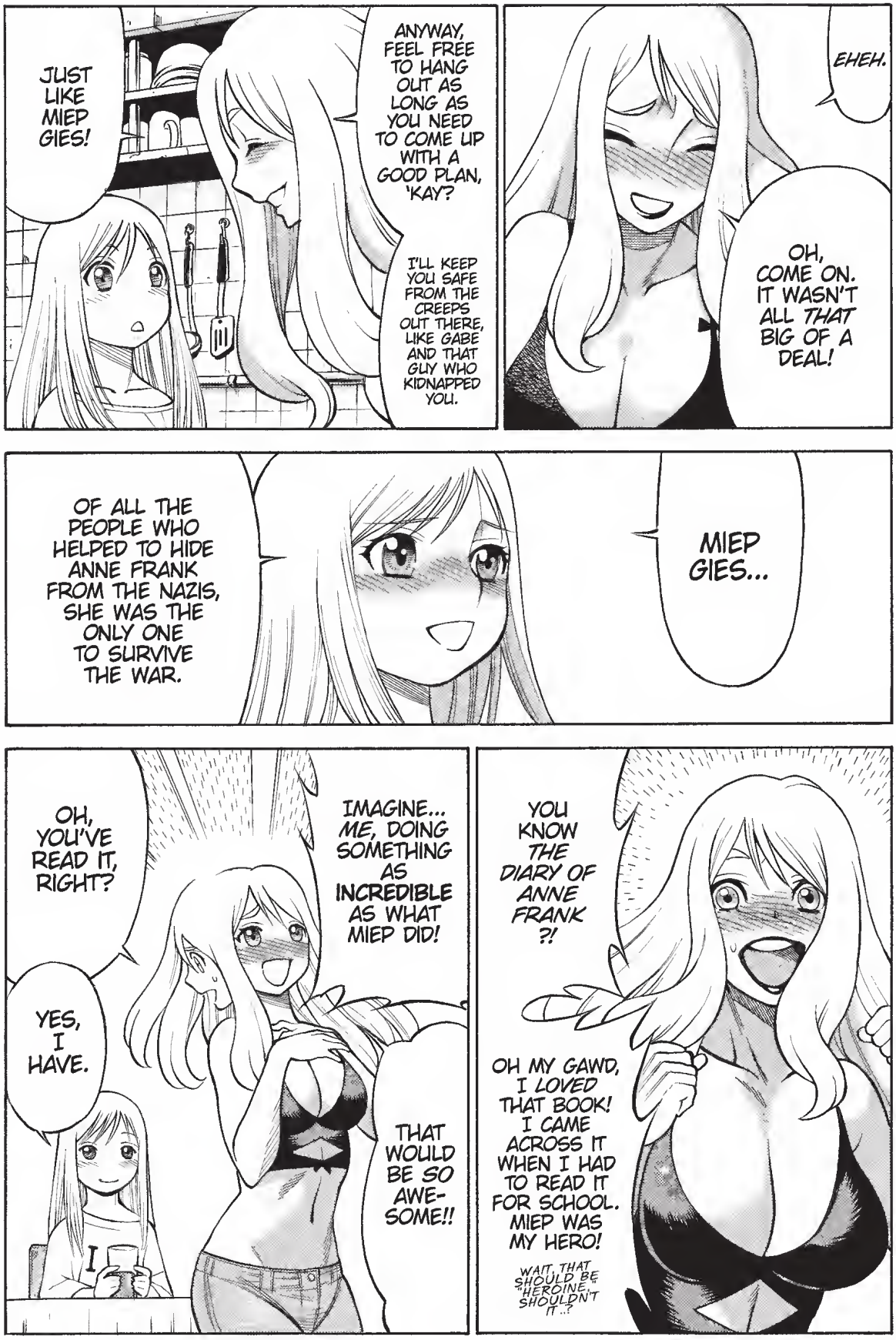
!
HEH.
SNAP
P/D
DON'T WORRY, YUKI.
IT IS NOTHING.

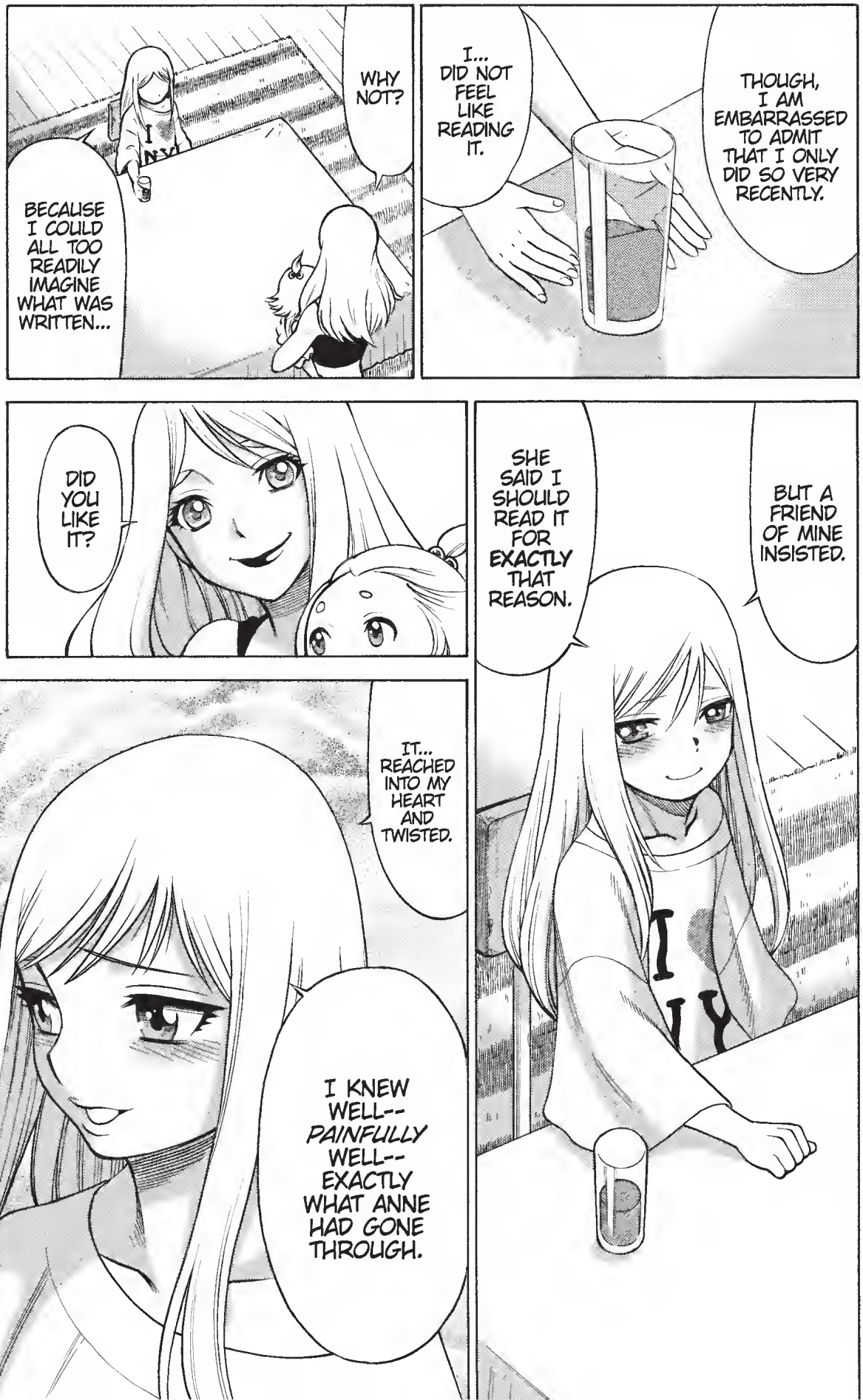
NOTHING AT ALL.

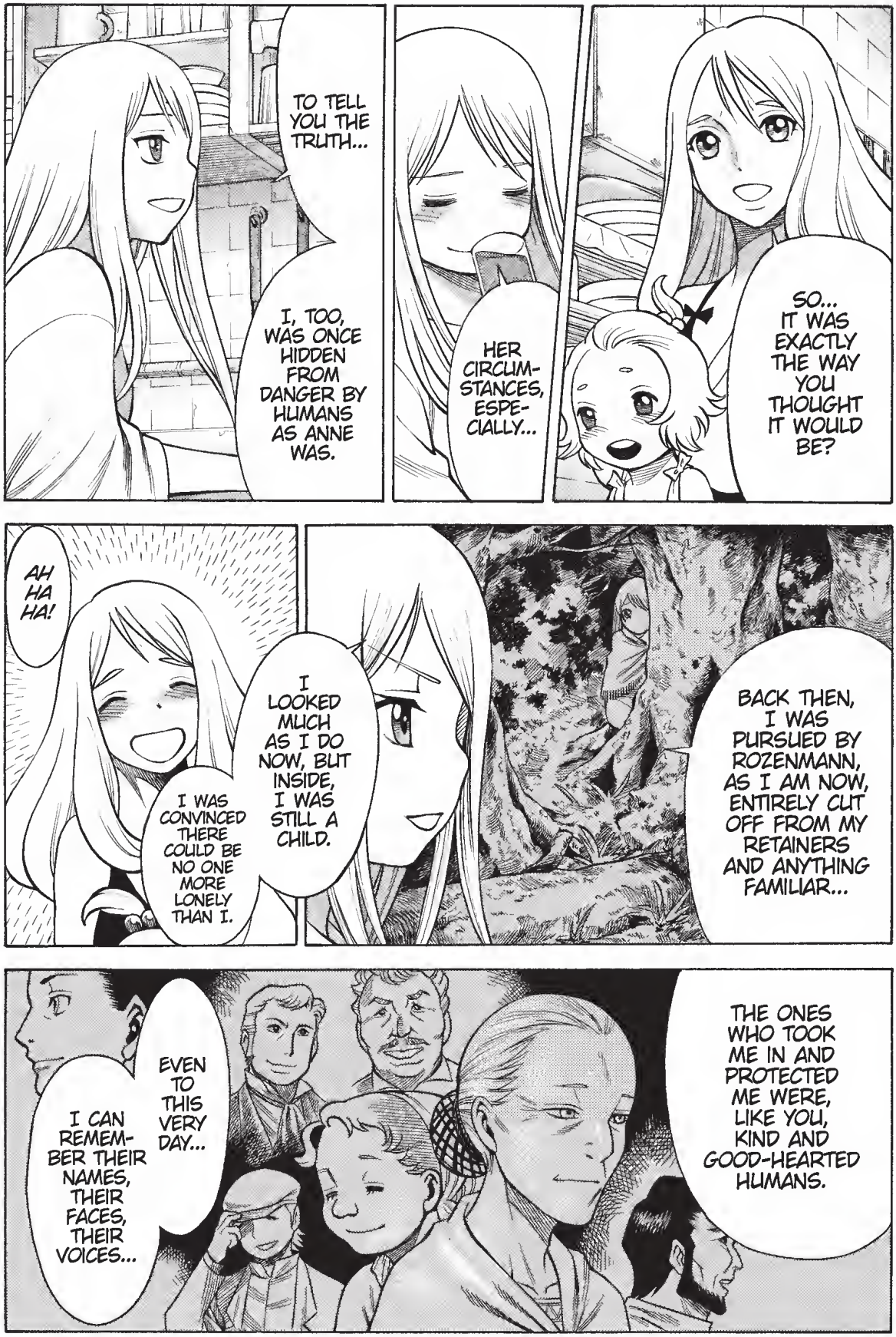
Chapter 57: Red Doubt

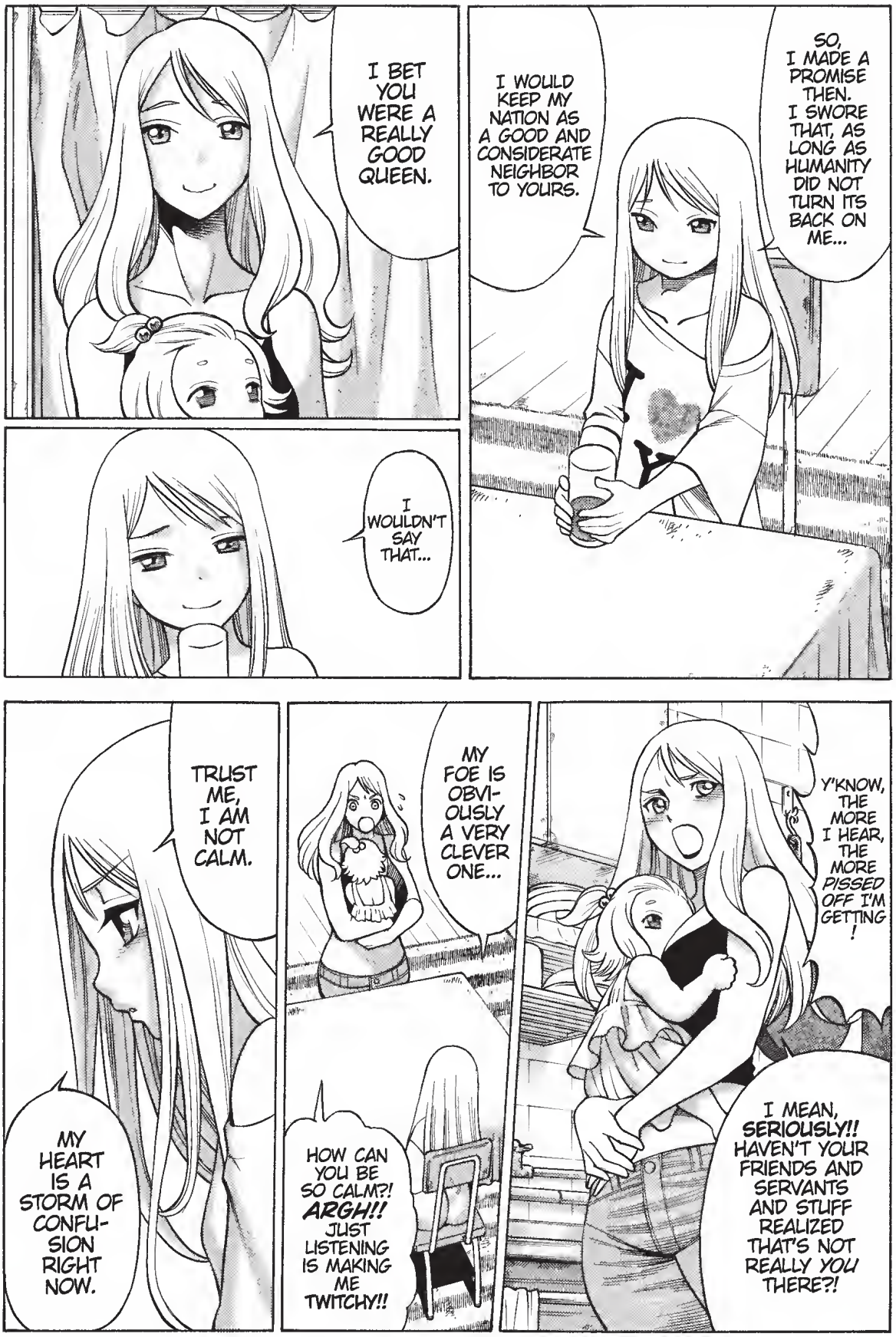
SO...
WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS THAT THE GIRL I SAW ON THE TV IS SOME KIND OF FAKE...
EXACTLY.
WHILE SITTING RIGHT HERE IN MY KITCHEN IS THE TRUE, HONEST-TO-GOD QUEEN OF THE VAMPIRES.
THEN WHAT'RE YOU JUST SITTIN' AROUND FOR?! ISN'T THIS, LIKE, A HUGE, GLOBALLY IMPORTANT PROBLEM?!
I'LL LET YOU USE MY PHONE. GO AND GIVE YOUR PEOPLE OR WHATEVER A CALL, AND TELL 'EM THAT'S AN EVIL TWIN THEY'RE TAKIN' ORDERS FROM!
IT IS NOT THAT SIMPLE.
I MUST ASSUME THAT AS OF THE MOMENT I ESCAPED FROM THE LABORATORY, ANY AND ALL TELEPHONE AND CELL PHONE COMMUNICATIONS LEAVING THIS COUNTRY ARE BEING MONITORED FOR *PRECISELY* SUCH A CALL.


HERE, PRINCESS.
AAH! THANK YOU, SUSY. THAT'S SWEET OF YOU.
I THOUGHT AS MUCH...
SORRY!
SOMETHING THAT FANCY IS WAAAY OUTTA MY PRICE RANGE!
ALTHOUGH, IF YOU HAD A SATELLITE PHONE, I COULD CIRCUMVENT ALL THAT...
OF COURSE, I WOULDN'T DO THAT.
HUMANITY IS THE VAMPIRE NATION'S NEIGHBOR ON THIS LITTLE WORLD OF OURS. AND I EVEN OWE MY LIFE TO GOOD SAMARITAN HUMANS, SUCH AS YOURSELF.
MAN, I CAN'T BELIEVE TOMATO JUICE REALLY DOES WORK AS A BLOOD SUBSTITUTE FOR YOU!
I THOUGHT STUFF LIKE THAT ONLY WORKED IN CARTOONS.
AH, WELL ...
THE IMPORTANT THING IS I DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT YOU COMING AFTER ME OR SUSY TO, LIKE, SUCK OUR BLOOD OR ANYTHING. THAT WAS A RELIEF, LET ME TELL YOU!

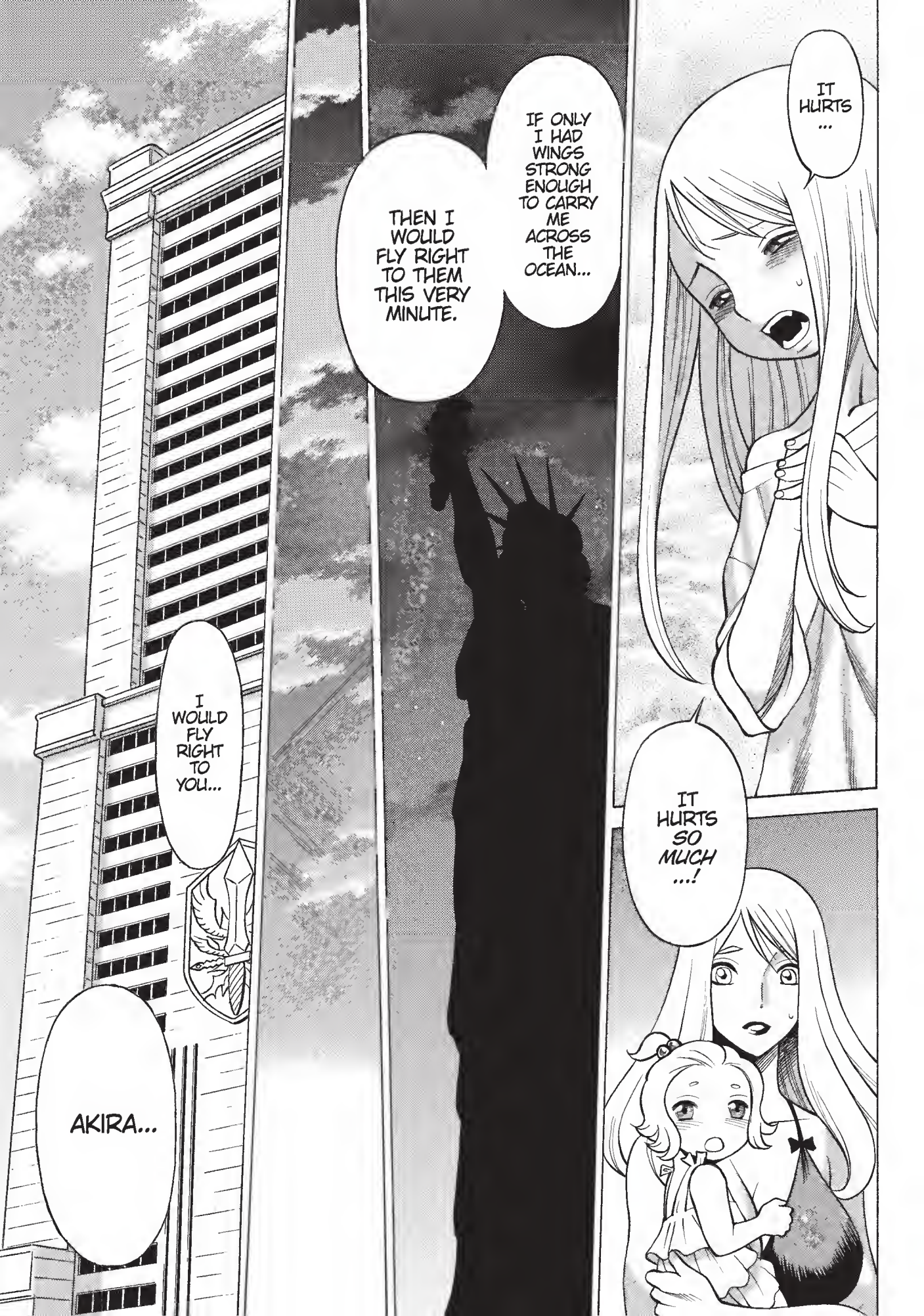

ANYWAY, FEEL FREE TO HANG OUT AS LONG AS YOU NEED TO COME UP WITH A GOOD PLAN, 'KAY?
I'LL KEEP YOU SAFE FROM THE CREEPS OUT THERE, LIKE GABE AND THAT GUY WHO KIDNAPPED YOU.
JUST LIKE MIEP GIES!
EHEH.
OH, COME ON. IT WASN'T ALL *THAT* BIG OF A DEAL!
MIEP GIES...
OF ALL THE PEOPLE WHO HELPED TO HIDE ANNE FRANK FROM THE NAZIS, SHE WAS THE ONLY ONE TO SURVIVE THE WAR.
YOU KNOW *THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK* ?!
OH MY GAWD, I *LOVED* THAT BOOK! I CAME ACROSS IT WHEN I HAD TO READ IT FOR SCHOOL. MIEP WAS MY HERO!
WAIT, THAT SHOULD BE "HEROINE," SHOULDN'T IT ..?
IMAGINE... *ME*, DOING SOMETHING AS **INCREDIBLE** AS WHAT MIEP DID!
OH, YOU'VE READ IT, RIGHT?
YES, I HAVE.
THAT WOULD BE *SO* AWE-SOME!!

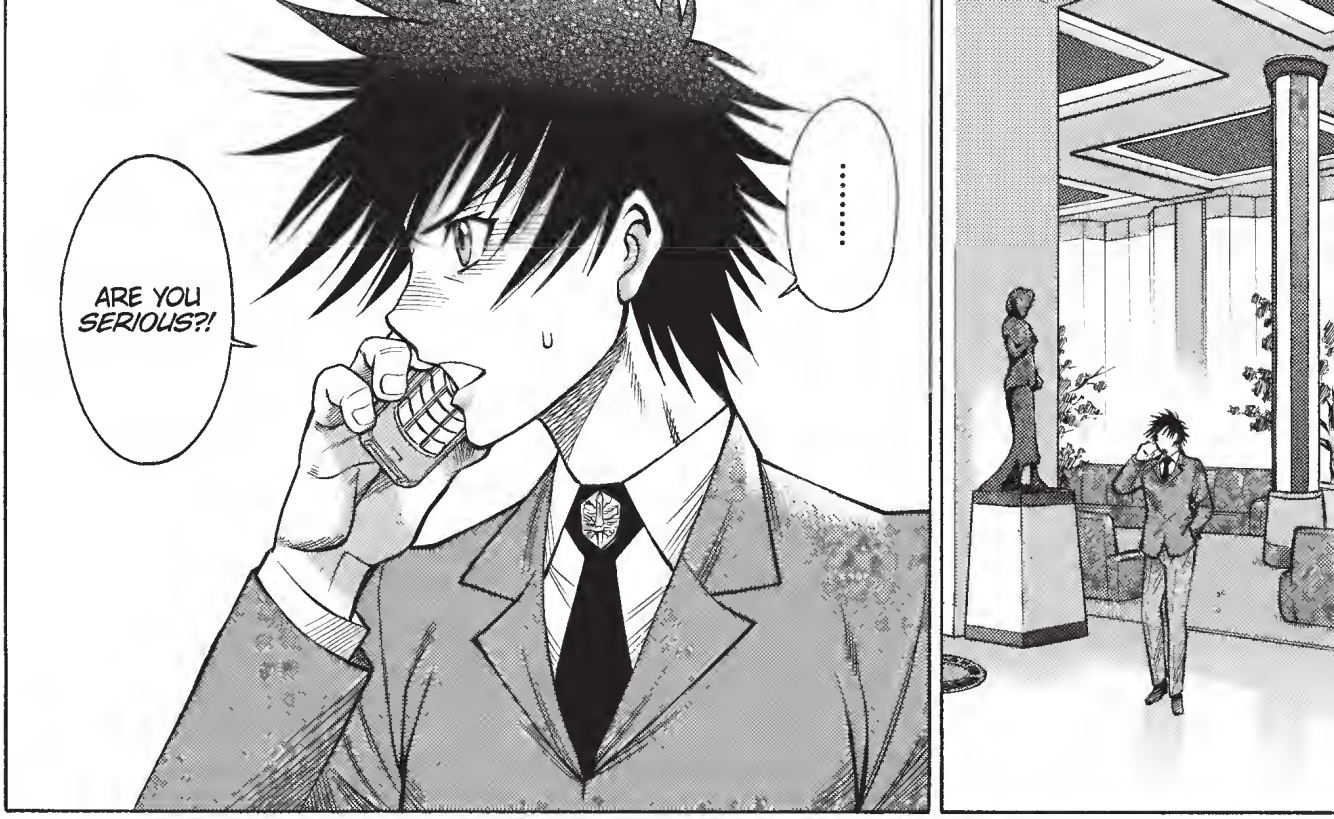

WHY NOT?
BECAUSE I COULD ALL TOO READILY IMAGINE WHAT WAS WRITTEN...
I... DID NOT FEEL LIKE READING IT.
THOUGH, I AM EMBARRASSED TO ADMIT THAT I ONLY DID SO VERY RECENTLY.
DID YOU LIKE IT?
SHE SAID I SHOULD READ IT FOR EXACTLY THAT REASON.
BUT A FRIEND OF MINE INSISTED.
IT... REACHED INTO MY HEART AND TWISTED.
I KNEW WELL-- *PAINFULLY* WELL-- EXACTLY WHAT ANNE HAD GONE THROUGH.

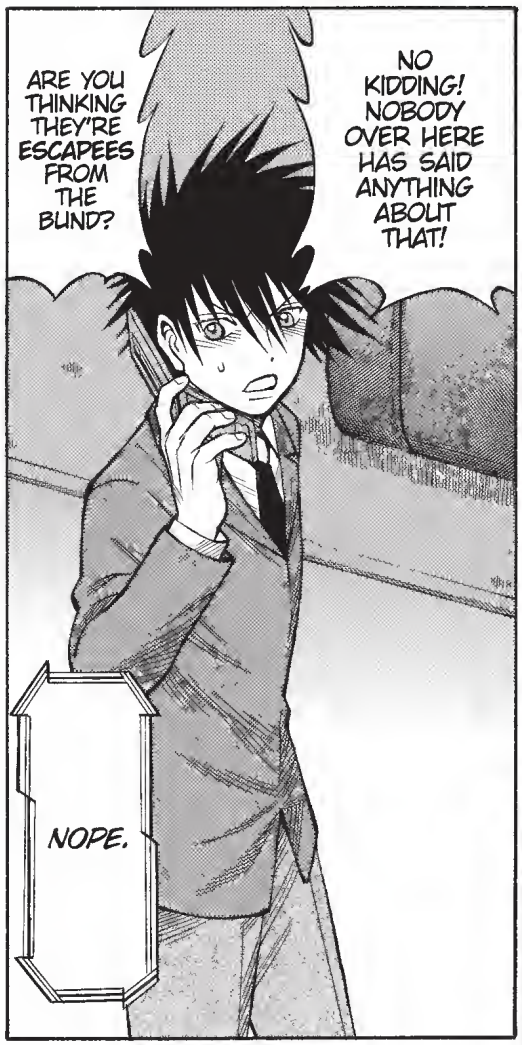

TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH...
I, TOO, WAS ONCE HIDDEN FROM DANGER BY HUMANS AS ANNE WAS.
HER CIRCUM-STANCES, ESPE-CIALLY...
SO... IT WAS EXACTLY THE WAY YOU THOUGHT IT WOULD BE?
AH HA HA!
I WAS CONVINCED THERE COULD BE NO ONE MORE LONELY THAN I.
I LOOKED MUCH AS I DO NOW, BUT INSIDE, I WAS STILL A CHILD.
BACK THEN, I WAS PURSUED BY ROZENMANN, AS I AM NOW, ENTIRELY CUT OFF FROM MY RETAINERS AND ANYTHING FAMILIAR...
I CAN REMEM-BER THEIR NAMES, THEIR FACES, THEIR VOICES...
EVEN TO THIS VERY DAY...
THE ONES WHO TOOK ME IN AND PROTECTED ME WERE, LIKE YOU, KIND AND GOOD-HEARTED HUMANS.


I BET YOU WERE A REALLY GOOD QUEEN.
I WOULDN'T SAY THAT...
I WOULD KEEP MY NATION AS A GOOD AND CONSIDERATE NEIGHBOR TO YOURS.
SO, I MADE A PROMISE THEN. I SWORE THAT, AS LONG AS HUMANITY DID NOT TURN ITS BACK ON ME...
TRUST ME, I AM NOT CALM.
MY HEART IS A STORM OF CONFU-SION RIGHT NOW.
MY FOE IS OBVI-OUSLY A VERY CLEVER ONE...
HOW CAN YOU BE SO CALM?! ARGH!! JUST LISTENING IS MAKING ME TWITCHY!!
Y'KNOW, THE MORE I HEAR, THE MORE PISSED OFF I'M GETTING!
I MEAN, SERIOUSLY!! HAVEN'T YOUR FRIENDS AND SERVANTS AND STUFF REALIZED THAT'S NOT REALLY YOU THERE?!

RIGHT NOW, EVERYONE PRECIOUS TO ME IS STANDING BY HER SIDE...
NOT EVEN ONCE *DOUBTING* THAT SHE IS ME.
THEY ARE SPEAKING TO HER THE WORDS THEY MEAN FOR ME...
GIVING TO HER THE SAME LOYALTY, AND... AND LOVE THAT THEY MEAN FOR ME...

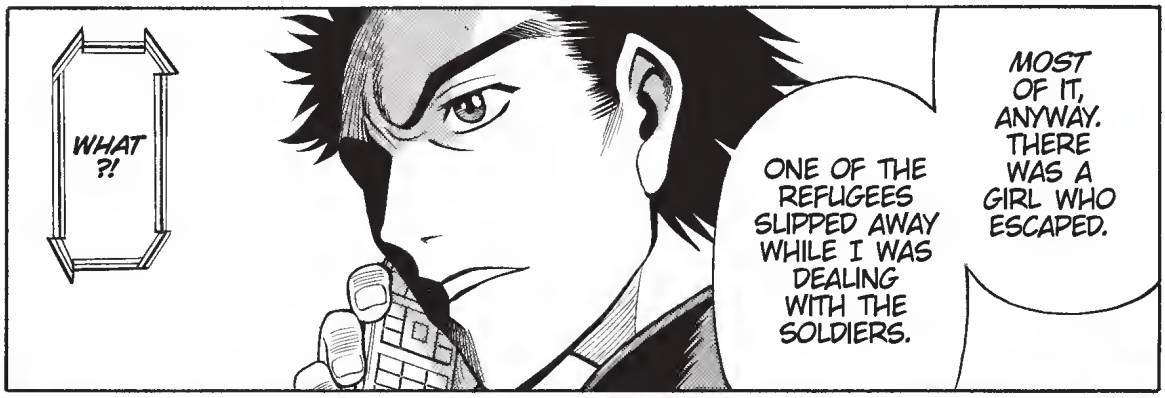

IT HURTS ...
IF ONLY I HAD WINGS STRONG ENOUGH TO CARRY ME ACROSS THE OCEAN...
THEN I WOULD FLY RIGHT TO THEM THIS VERY MINUTE.
IT HURTS SO MUCH ...!
I WOULD FLY RIGHT TO YOU...
AKIRA...

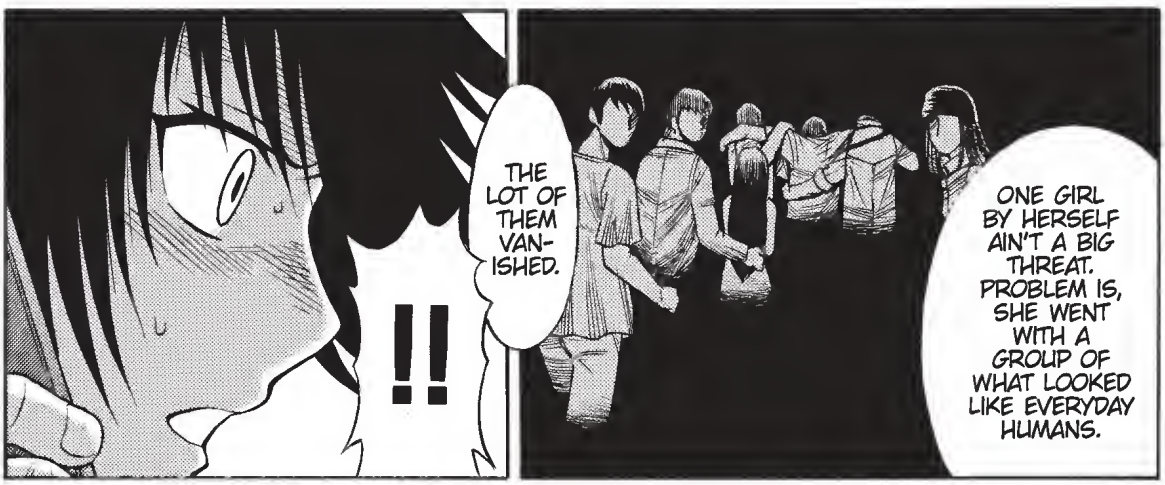

.....
ARE YOU SERIOUS?!

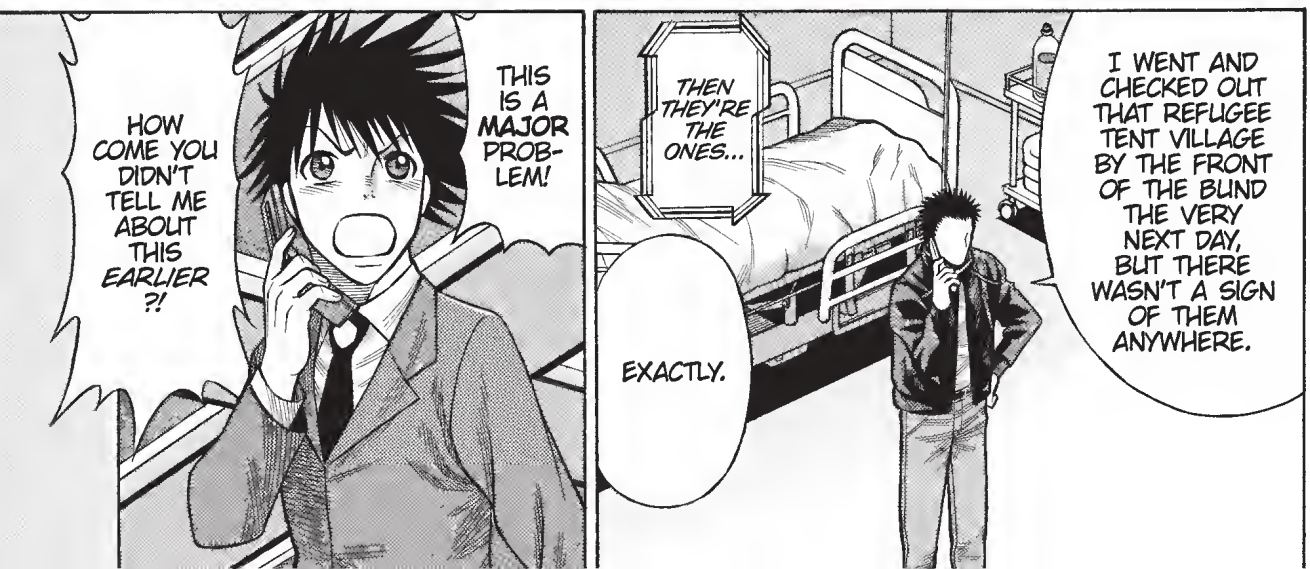

NO KIDDING! NOBODY OVER HERE HAS SAID ANYTHING ABOUT THAT!
ARE YOU THINKING THEY'RE ESCAPEES FROM THE BUND?
NOPE.

YEP.
THERE'S A GANG OF VAGRANT VAMPIRES, HIDING OUT SOMEWHERE IN TOKYO.
I DOUBT THERE'S MORE THAN A HANDFUL OF THEM RIGHT NOW, BUT IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING QUICK, THAT NUMBER'S GONNA GO UP IN A REAL BIG HURRY.

IVANOVIC CAUSED A BIG ENOUGH RUCKUS THAT LI MANAGED TO SLIP IN AND ATTACK A MAINLAND FACILITY.
YEAH... HE WENT AFTER THOSE REFUGEES OF HIS THAT WE TOOK IN, RIGHT?
YOU PUT A STOP TO THAT ONE.


MOST OF IT, ANYWAY. THERE WAS A GIRL WHO ESCAPED.
ONE OF THE REFUGEES SLIPPED AWAY WHILE I WAS DEALING WITH THE SOLDIERS.
WHAT ?!


ONE GIRL BY HERSELF AIN'T A BIG THREAT. PROBLEM IS, SHE WENT WITH A GROUP OF WHAT LOOKED LIKE EVERYDAY HUMANS.
THE LOT OF THEM VANISHED.
!!


I WENT AND CHECKED OUT THAT REFUGEE TENT VILLAGE BY THE FRONT OF THE BUND THE VERY NEXT DAY, BUT THERE WASN'T A SIGN OF THEM ANYWHERE.
THEN THEY'RE THE ONES...
EXACTLY.
THIS IS A MAJOR PROBLEM!
HOW COME YOU DIDN'T TELL ME ABOUT THIS EARLIER ?!

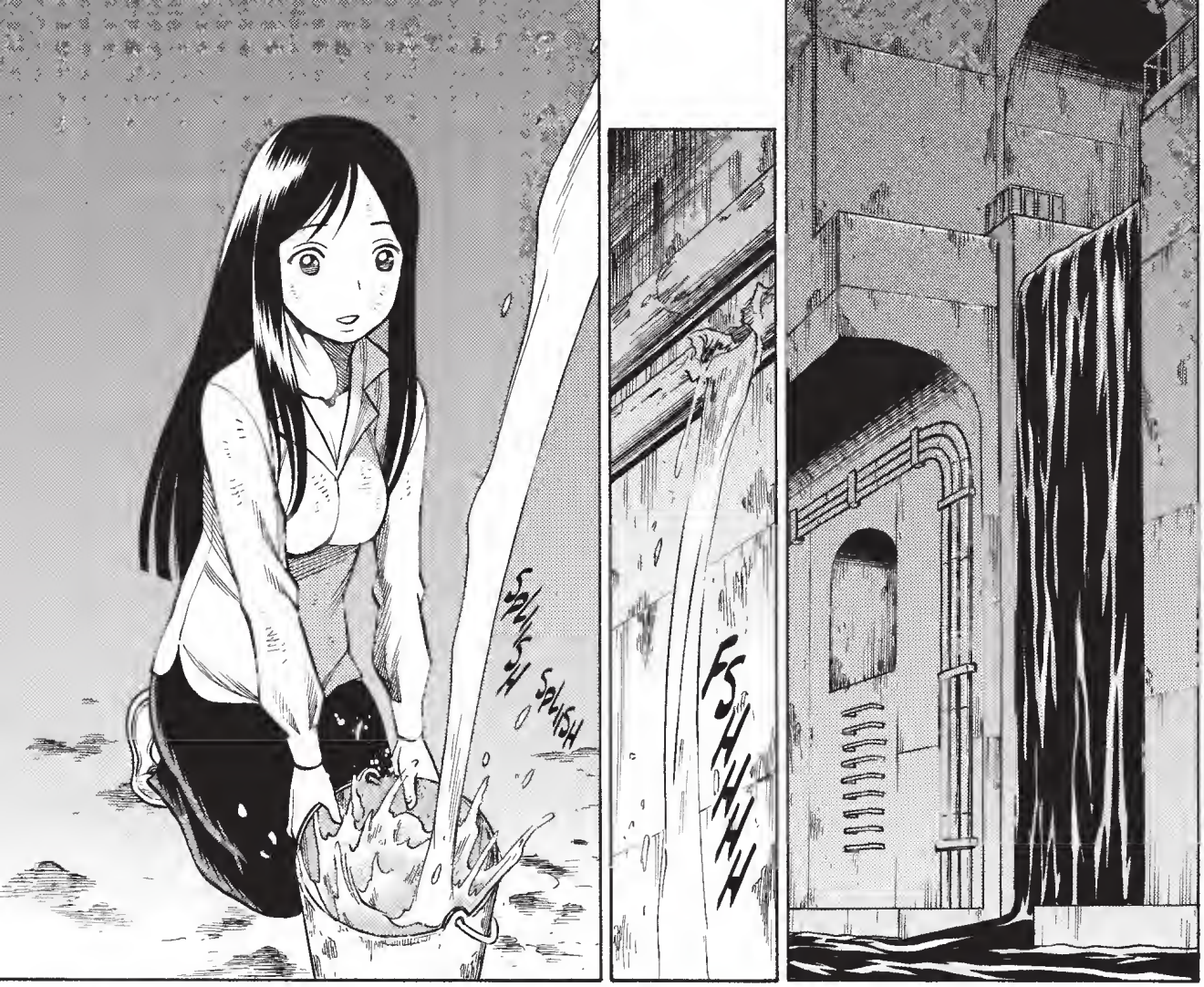
HELL NO, IT AIN'T SMART. BUT THINK ABOUT IT. WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN IF THE WORST COMES ABOUT, AND NOBODY'S TOLD ANYBODY ANYTHING?
YOU SURE THAT'S SMART ...?
HEY, DON'T BITE MY HEAD OFF. THE HIGHER-UPS PUT A GAG ORDER ON THIS ONE RIGHT DAMN QUICK.
IT'S BEING TREATED AS AN ULTRA, TOP SECRET SITUATION. I'M TELLING YOU THIS TOTALLY ON MY OWN PERSONAL DISCRETION.
THE FIRST ONE GETTING THROWN UNDER THE BUS IS THE MEDIATOR BETWEEN THE VAMPIRE NATION AND HUMANITY-- GOTOH-SAN.
AND THAT I HAVE TO PREVENT, NO MATTER WHAT.
HEY, LISTEN AND REMEMBER THIS, MY YOUNG PADAWAN ...
A MAN WILL TAKE ON HELL ITSELF, UNARMED AND ALONE, ALL FOR THE SAKE OF THE WOMAN HE LOVES.
SO, YOU'RE MAKING SURE THERE'S BEEN OFFICIAL CONTACT BETWEEN THE TWO OF US ABOUT THE PROBLEM BEFORE ANY CRISIS, HUH...?
ISN'T THAT A LITTLE CHEAP?

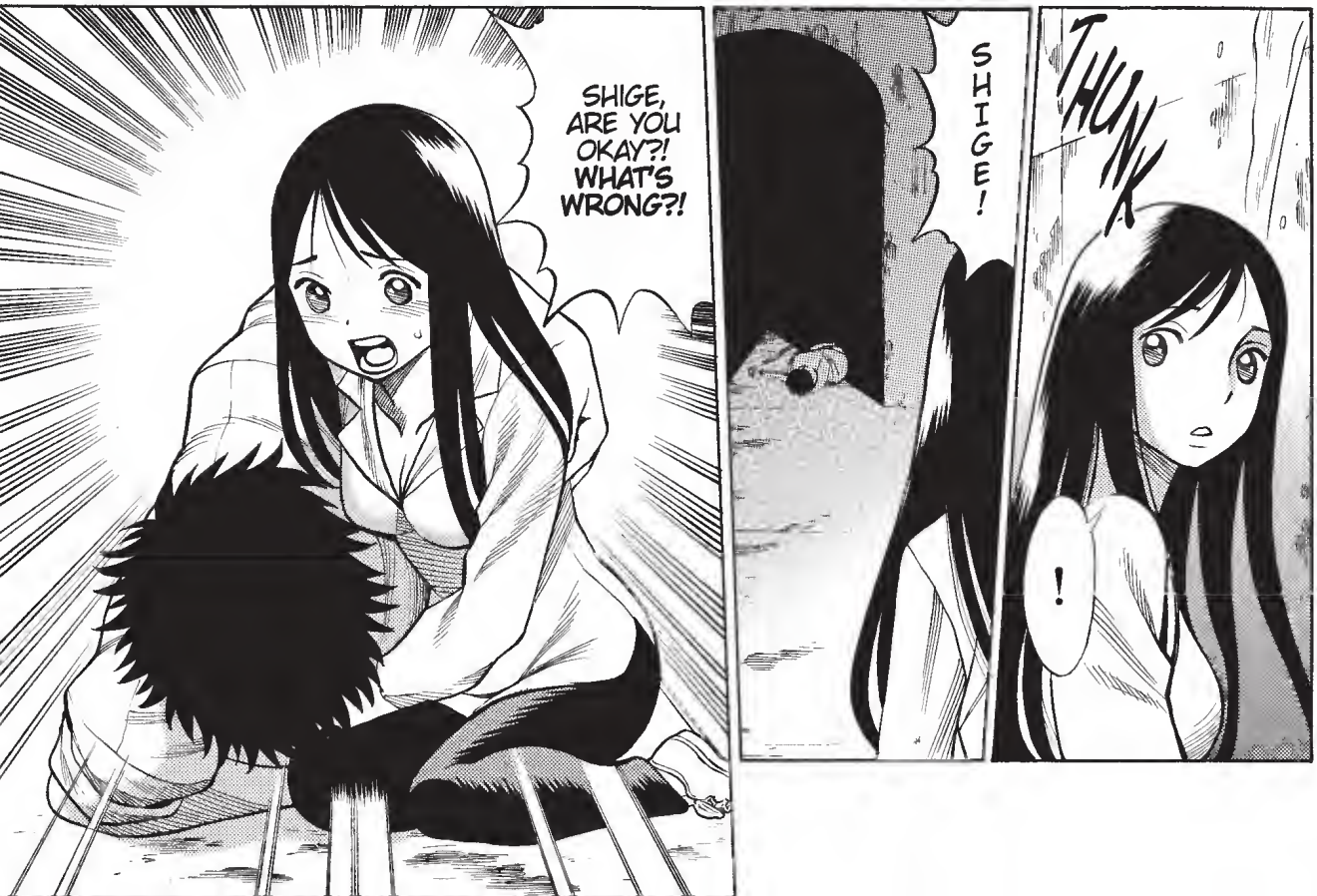
YEAH, YEAH. WHAT-EVER ...
ANYWAY, WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TELLING ME THIS FOR? AREN'T THERE OTHER PEOPLE WHO SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THIS FIRST?
OH, TRUST ME. IF YOUR DAD OR VERA-SAN WERE ANYWHERE AROUND, I WOULD'VE TOLD THEM IMMEDIATELY.
HOWEVER, THE BOTH OF THEM ARE OFF RUNNING IN CIRCLES IN RUSSIA.
CAN'T REALLY GET TO HER MAJESTY, EITHER, 'CUZ ANYWHERE SHE GOES...
!
DUKE BORGIANI IS THERE, RIGHT IN FRONT OF HER.
THAT MAN'S AS CLEAR AS FOG...
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT HE'S UP TO, AND I DON'T LIKE IT.
BUT ANY-WAY, AKIRA ...
I'LL LEAVE IT ENTIRELY UP TO YOU ABOUT WHEN, HOW, AND TO WHO YOU PASS THIS INFO ON TO.

JUST KEEP ONE THING IN MIND. RIGHT NOW, THE ONLY ONE HER MAJESTY'S GOT BY HER...
IS YOU.
SNAP
JUST ME, HUH?
WHEW ...
AH! HAMA-SAN! NO CELL PHONES IN A PATIENT'S ROOM!
URK!
SORRY, SORRY! KINDA HAD TO TAKE THAT CALL...

WHOOSH
SAY, YOU WOULDN'T HAPPEN TO KNOW IF MY BOSS IS HERE YET?
GOTOH-SAN? NO...
CHOMP

NYAM...
AHM...
.....
MMPH...
NNPH...
YANK
AAAH!
BOFF
STAY IN BED, YA OLD FART!!
!!
FOR THE GLORY... OF LORD LI...
FOR...
FOR OUR LORD...


SPLISH SPLISH
FSHHHH

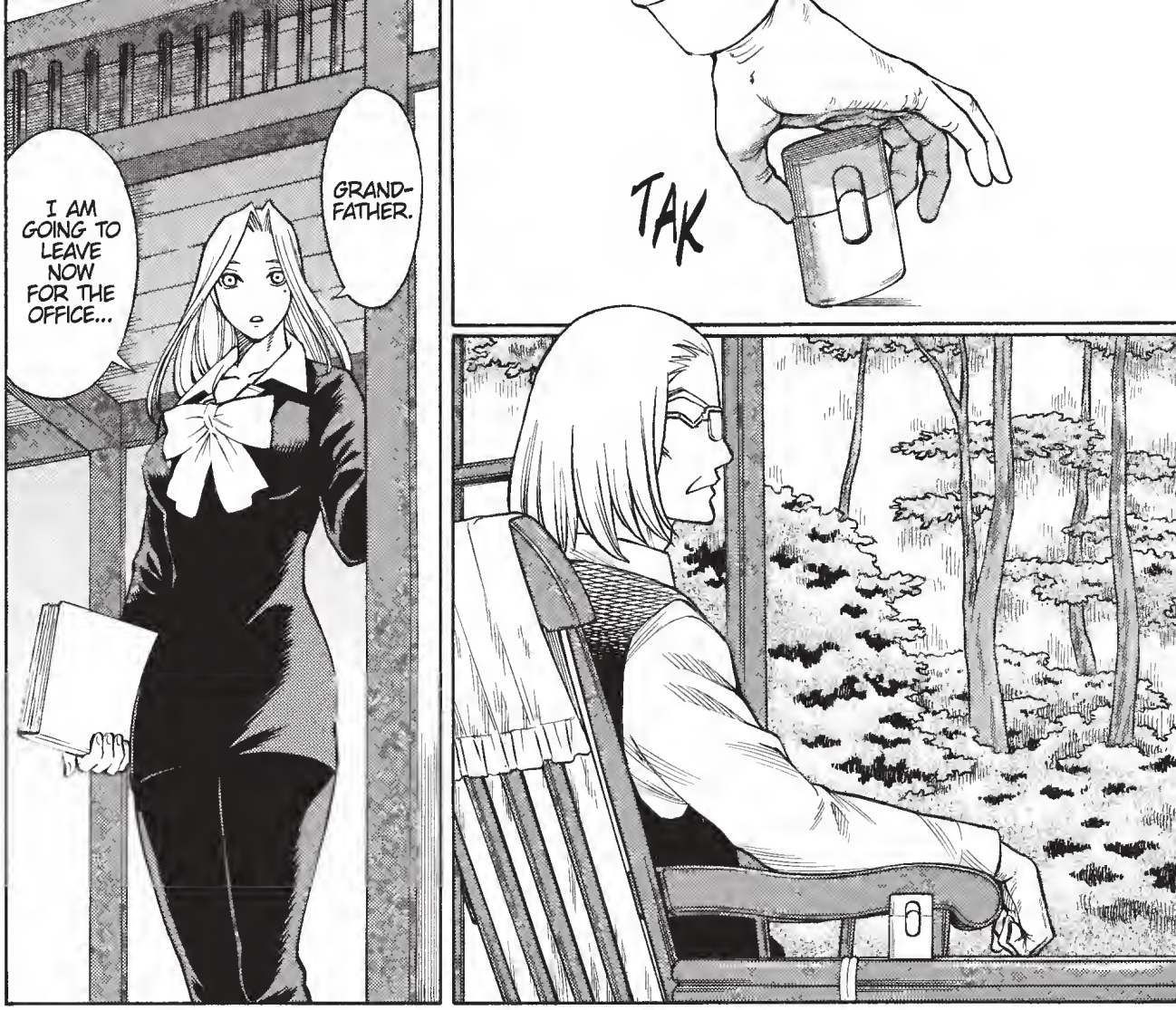

SHIGE, ARE YOU OKAY?! WHAT'S WRONG?!
SHIGE!
THUNK
!

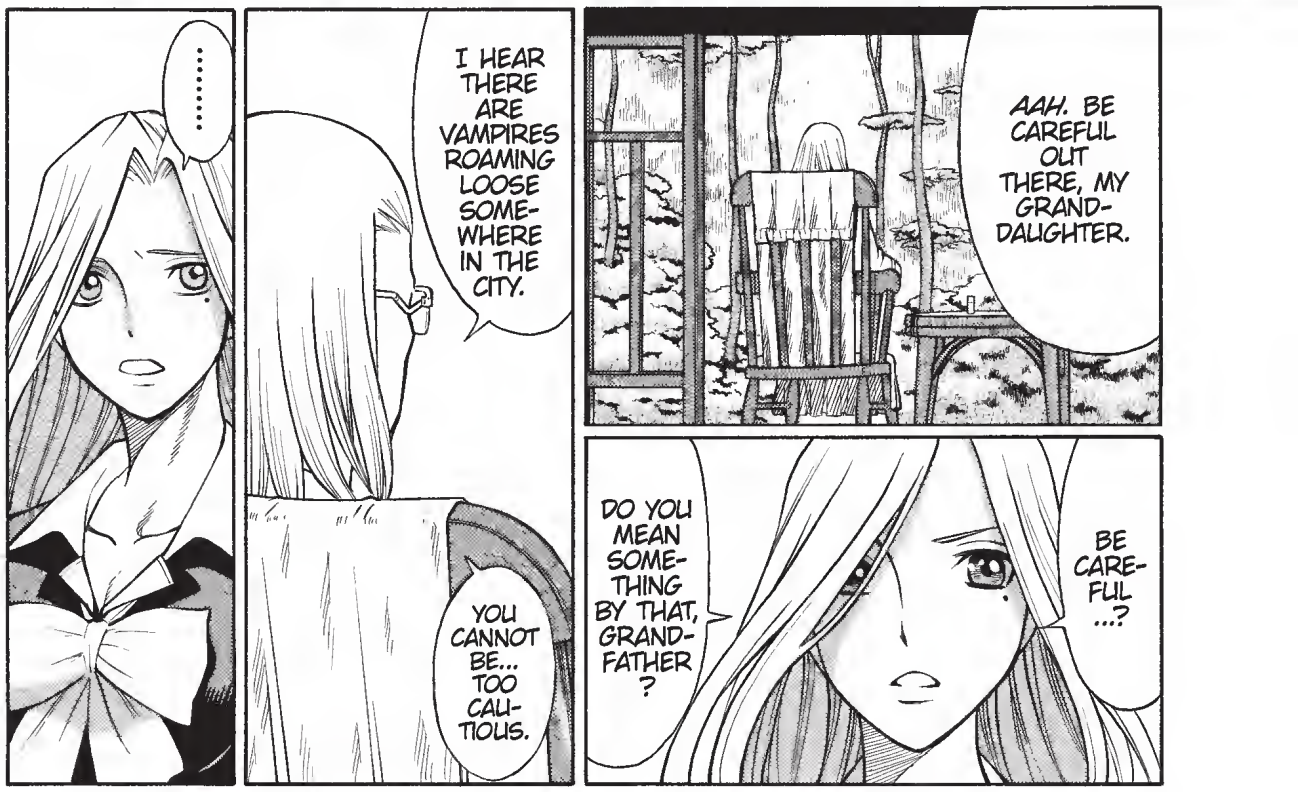
MY... MY HEAD... IT HURTS ...!
SOME-THING'S... IN IT... AAAAGH!
GOD, IT HURTS !
WHAT THE HELL IS HAPPEN-ING TO ME?!
!
THIS IS THE SAME AS WHAT HAPPENED IN OUR VILLAGE ...!
.....
FOR OUR LORD...
FOR LORD LI...

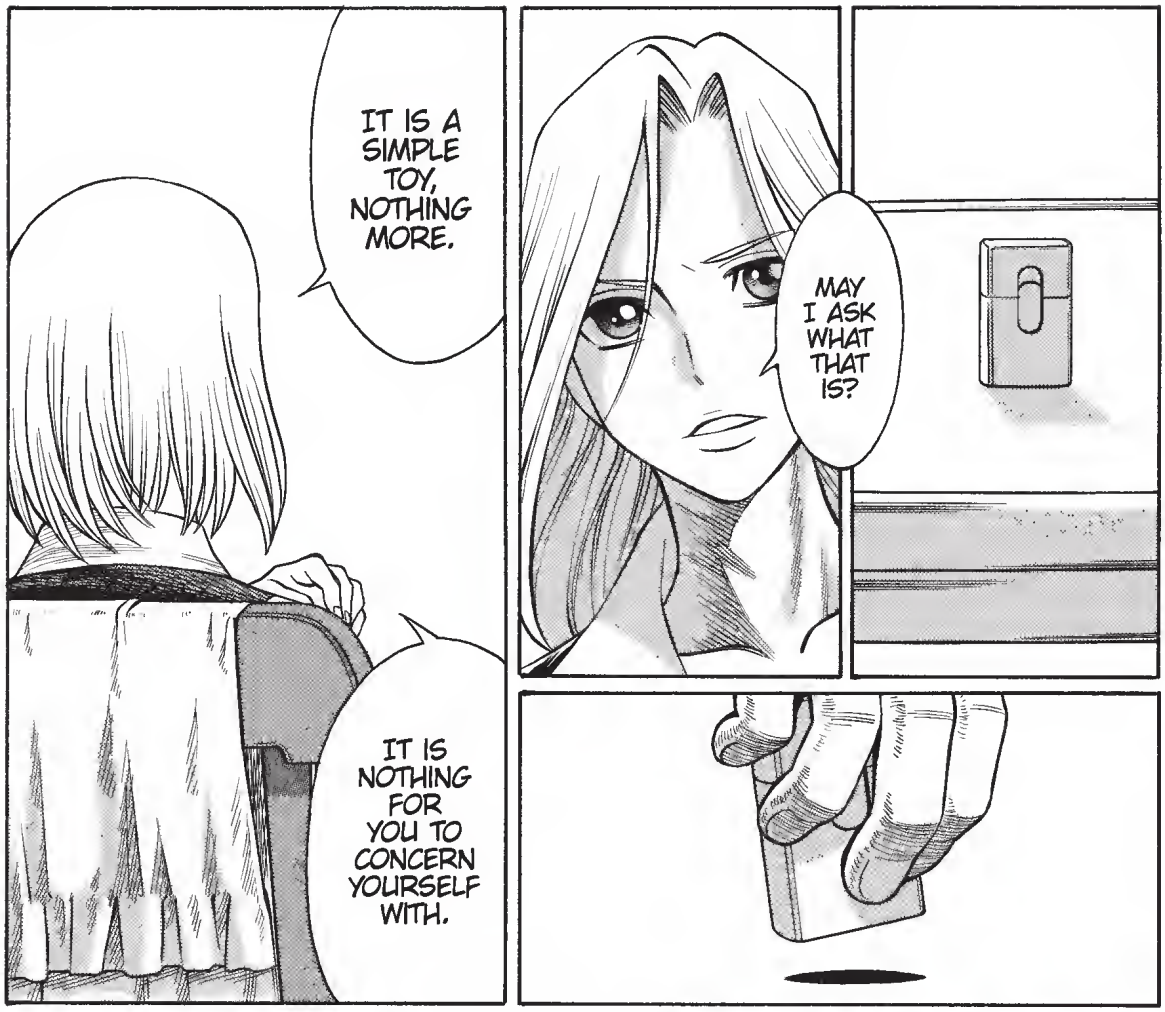
GHAH !!
FWMP
HEY, YOU GUYS! WHERE ARE YOU ALL HEADED ?!
FOR THE GLORY OF THE CLAN.
FOR THE GLORY OF OUR LORD.

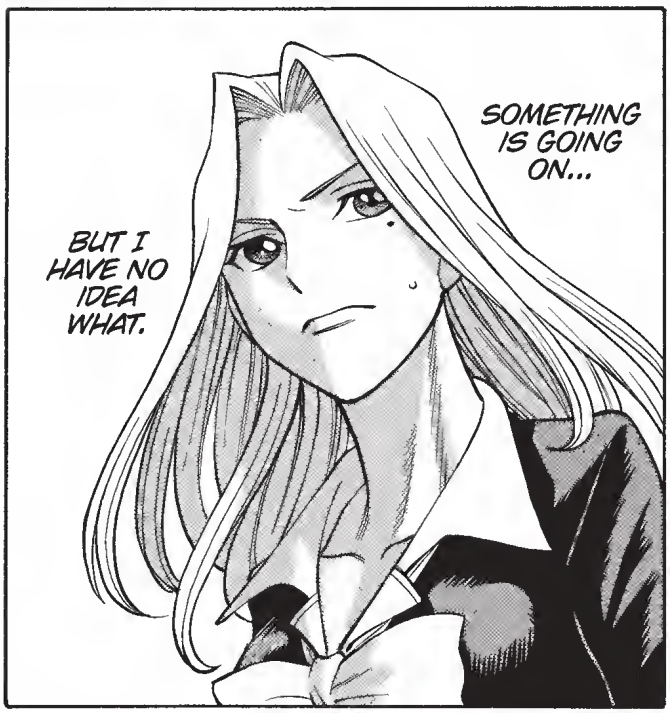
ALL GLORY ...

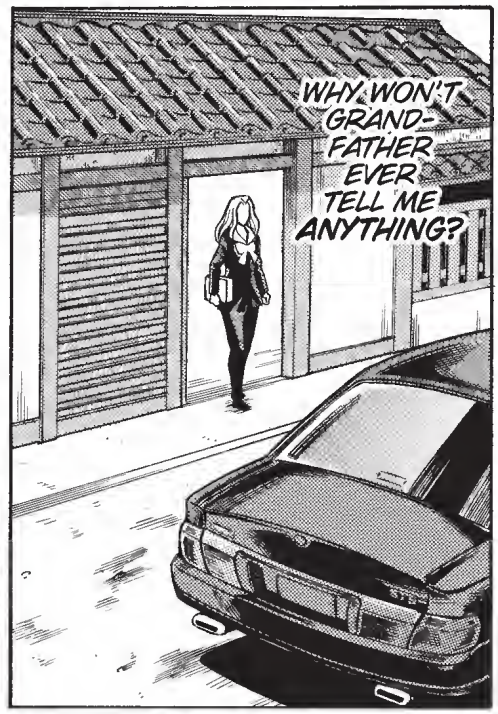
TO LORD LI!


I AM GOING TO LEAVE NOW FOR THE OFFICE...
GRAND-FATHER.
TAK


.....
I HEAR THERE ARE VAMPIRES ROAMING LOOSE SOME-WHERE IN THE CITY.
YOU CANNOT BE... TOO CAU-TIOUS.
AAH. BE CAREFUL OUT THERE, MY GRAND-DAUGHTER.
DO YOU MEAN SOME-THING BY THAT, GRAND-FATHER ?
BE CARE-FUL ...?


IT IS A SIMPLE TOY, NOTHING MORE.
IT IS NOTHING FOR YOU TO CONCERN YOURSELF WITH.
MAY I ASK WHAT THAT IS?


SOMETHING IS GOING ON...
BUT I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT.


WHY WON'T GRAND-FATHER EVER TELL ME ANYTHING?

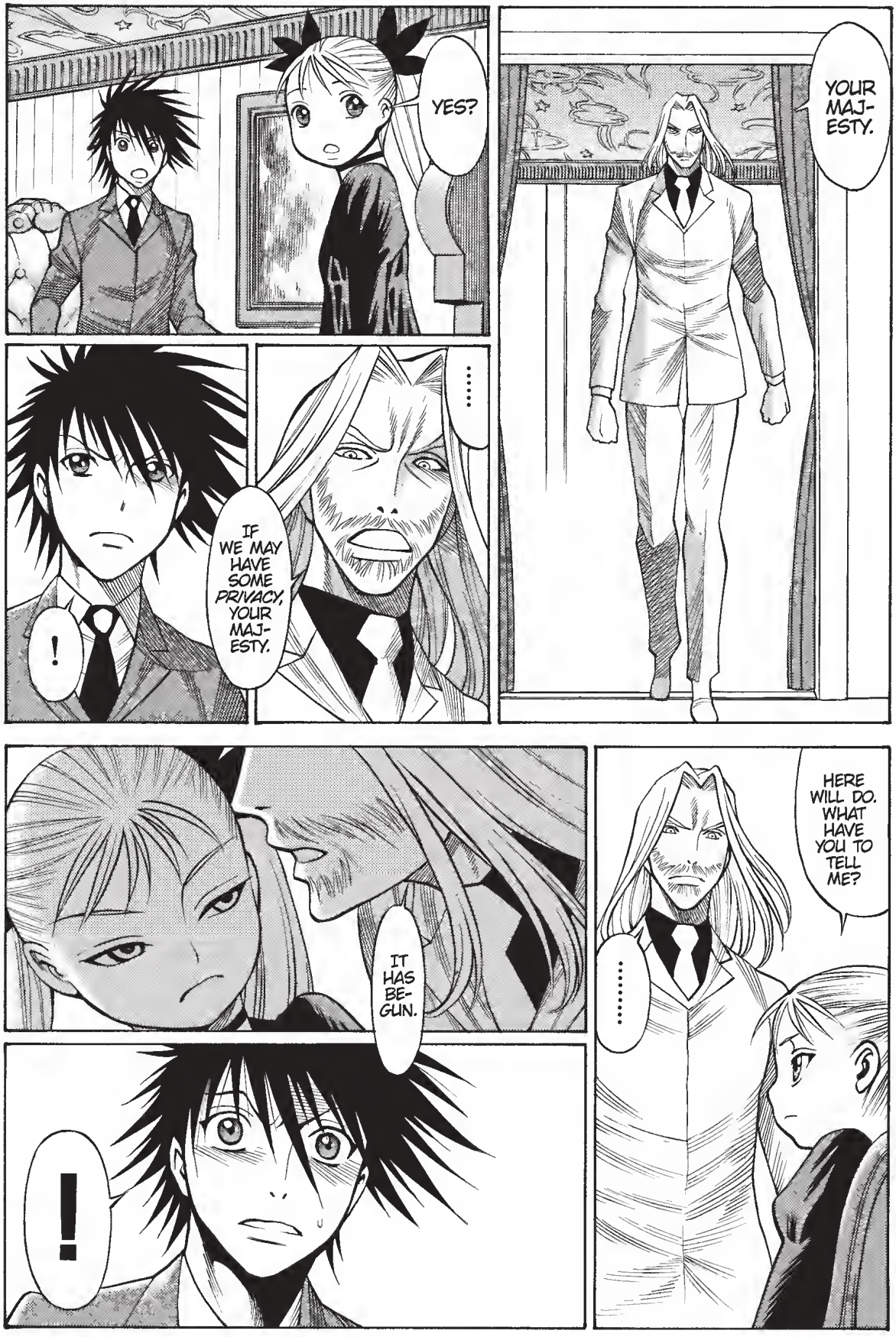
AND I HAD TO HEAR IT FROM HAMA. IS IT REALLY POSSIBLE FOR THEIR POLICE FORCE TO HAVE COME ACROSS THAT KIND OF INFORMATION WITHOUT THE BUND'S INTELLIGENCE DIVISION SNIFFING IT OUT FIRST?
VAMPIRES. ON THE MAIN-LAND.
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT HE'S UP TO, AND I DON'T LIKE IT.
AHAHA HAHAHA
I'D BETTER LET HIME-SAN KNOW. IT'S PROBABLY SAFE TO KEEP IT FROM EVERYBODY ELSE, BUT HIME-SAN'S GOTTA BE TOLD!

IT WAS IN-CREDI-BLE!
THAT HAMBURGER AKIRA MADE FOR ME--HIS "KABURAGI SPECIAL," AS HE SO GRANDLY CALLED IT--WAS A THING OUT OF NIGHT-MARES!
IT WAS OBVIOUS HE WAS TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE FACT THAT VAMPIRES HAVE NO SENSE OF TASTE.
HE HAD LADEN IT WITH SO MANY SPICES AND HOT SAUCES AND SEASONINGS AND WHATNOT, YOU COULD HARDLY SEE THE MEAT FOR ALL THAT GOOP!
I HAD TO HUMOR HIM, THOUGH. SO I TOOK A BITE.
I WAS IN NEAR TEARS FROM HOW HARD IT WAS TO HOLD BACK THE LAUGHTER. ALL I COULD GET OUT AROUND THAT... THAT STUFF WAS... "IT'S TASTY."
HEY! STOP RIGHT THERE!
WHAT ARE YOU TWO GOING ON ABOUT?!
AH HA HA HA
OH, JUST A LITTLE FAIR PLAY. SEE, YUKI WAS SAYING THAT I ALWAYS SPILL OUR SECRETS TO YOU SO QUICKLY...
SO I DECIDED THAT THIS TIME, I WOULD TELL A SECRET OF YOURS TO HER.
HEY!

ARGH! GOD, IT'S AT TIMES LIKE THIS WHEN I SERIOUSLY WISH--!
WELL, PARDON ME FOR BEING UNFAMILIAR WITH SOME TOOLS OF THE COMMONER'S KITCHEN.
I MEAN, WHAT THE HELL WOULD A STRAIGHT RAZOR BE DOING IN A KITCHEN?! IT SHOULD'VE BEEN OBVIOUS WHAT IT WAS IF YOU'D JUST LOOKED AT IT AND THOUGHT FOR A SECOND!!
YOU AREN'T EXACTLY SHORT ON SECRETS YOURSELF, Y'KNOW!
AND HOW 'BOUT THE TIME YOU CALLED A POTATO PEELER A "FUNNY-LOOKING STRAIGHT RAZOR"!!
LIKE, THE TIME YOU SAW AN EGGBEATER IN THE UTENSIL DRAWER, AND WONDERED WHAT A TEA CEREMONY WHISK WAS DOING THERE!
It's all ri_
DAMMIT, HIME-SAN! THIS IS YOUR FAULT, Y'KNOW!!
YUKI! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
It's all right.
I was just laughing a little too hard,
that's all.

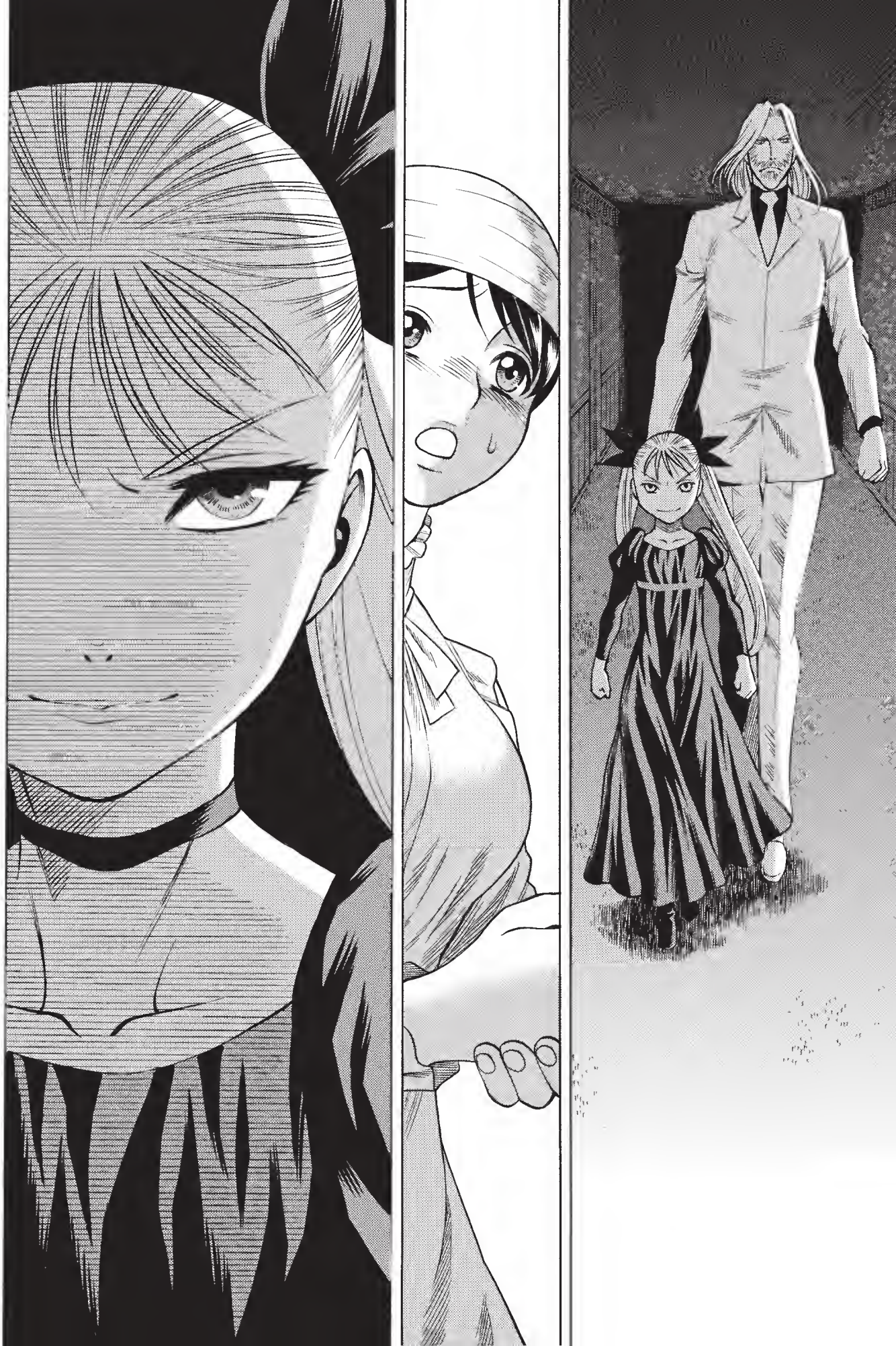
Akira-kun, you don't need to worry so much anymore. Hime-sama is back to her usual self.
YEAH. SHE IS, ISN'T SHE?
ME?!
MY FAULT? IT'S YOUR FAULT FOR BEING SO LOUD.
OH. WELL, THAT'S GOOD, I GUESS.
GIGGLE
GIGGLE
HAAH...
ENOUGH WITH THE SECRETS!
WHAT IS THIS? MORE SECRETS BETWEEN YOU TWO?

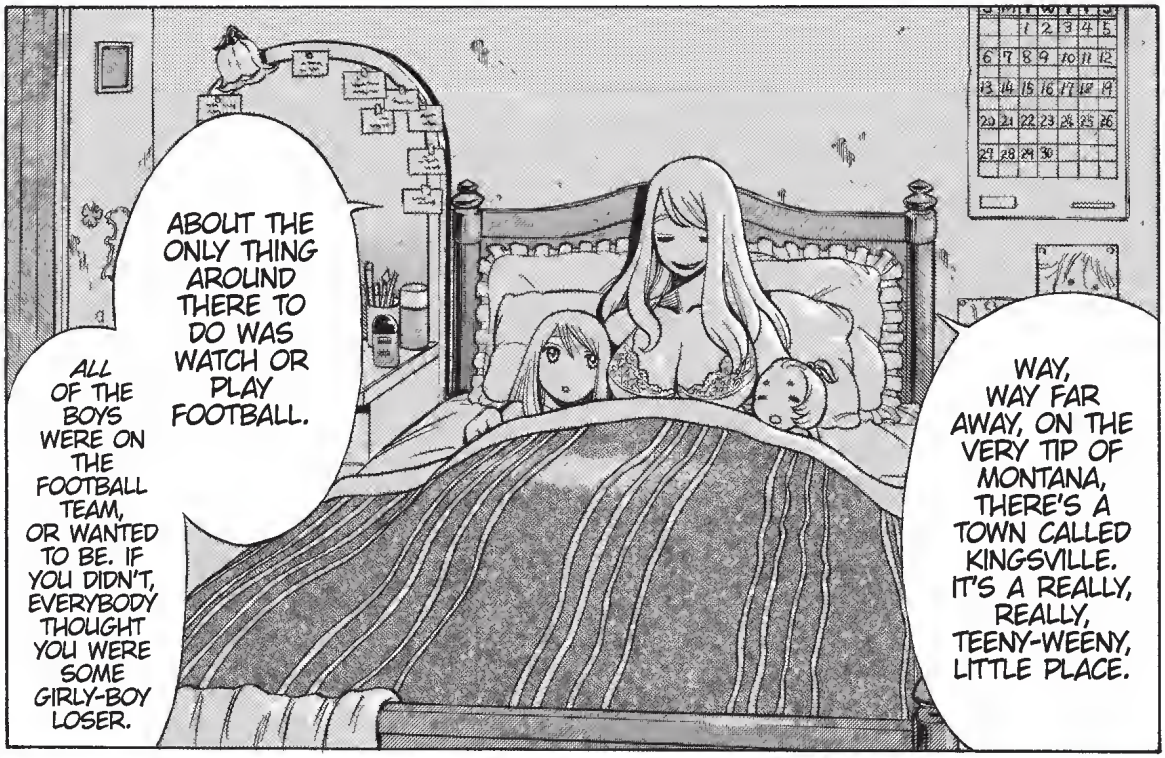
I WAS JUST THINKING ON HOW NEW AND INTERESTING THIS FEELING IS...
OH... NOTHING...
WHAT'S WITH THE HEAVY SIGH, HIME-SAN?
IT IS... WARM AND TICKLISH. LIKE I HAVE BEEN WRAPPED IN LAYER UPON LAYER OF FLUFFY COTTON.
HIME-SAN...
Give her a break, Akira-kun. Things have been very hard on Hime-sama since even before Ivanovic's attack.
OH, COME ON. QUIT EXAGGERATING.
YES. THINGS HAVE BEEN VERY, VERY HARD.
AND FOR A VERY...
VERY LONG TIME.


YES?
YOUR MAJ-ESTY.
IF WE MAY HAVE SOME PRIVACY, YOUR MAJ-ESTY.
!
HERE WILL DO. WHAT HAVE YOU TO TELL ME?
IT HAS BE-GUN.
!

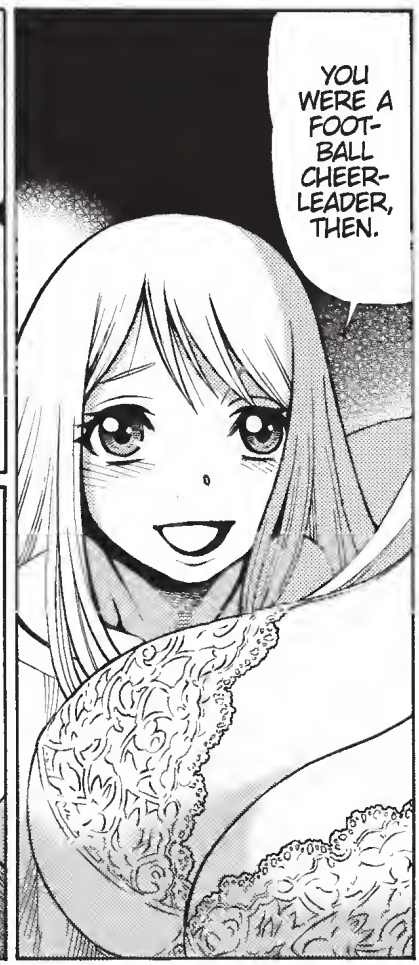
I'M SORRY, YUKI.
WE WILL HAVE TO POST-PONE OUR TEA UNTIL LATER.
"BE-GUN" ...?
TUNK
WHAT HAS "BE-GUN" ?!
A SUBJECT OF VERY COMPLEX AND VERY POLITICAL IMPORT.
IT IS NOT SOMETHING WITH WHICH YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO CONCERN YOURSELF.
AH.
I SEE YOU HAVE GIVEN A NAME TO YOUR LAPTOP.
Anne
"ANNE," HM...?
!
FROM THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK, I'M SURE. YOU ALWAYS DID LIKE THAT BOOK.
IT IS A VERY FITTING NAME. I APPROVE.

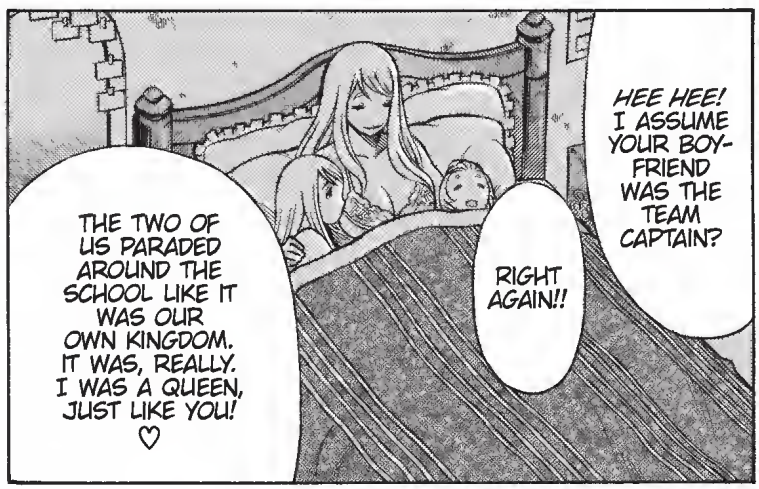
!
SORRY, YUKI. I'VE GOTTA GO, TOO.
I WANT TO DO A LITTLE DIGGING AROUND ABOUT THIS "HIGHLY POLITICAL" THING THAT JUST HAPPENED.
.....
.....
.....
"ANNE," HM...?
FROM THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK, I'M SURE...

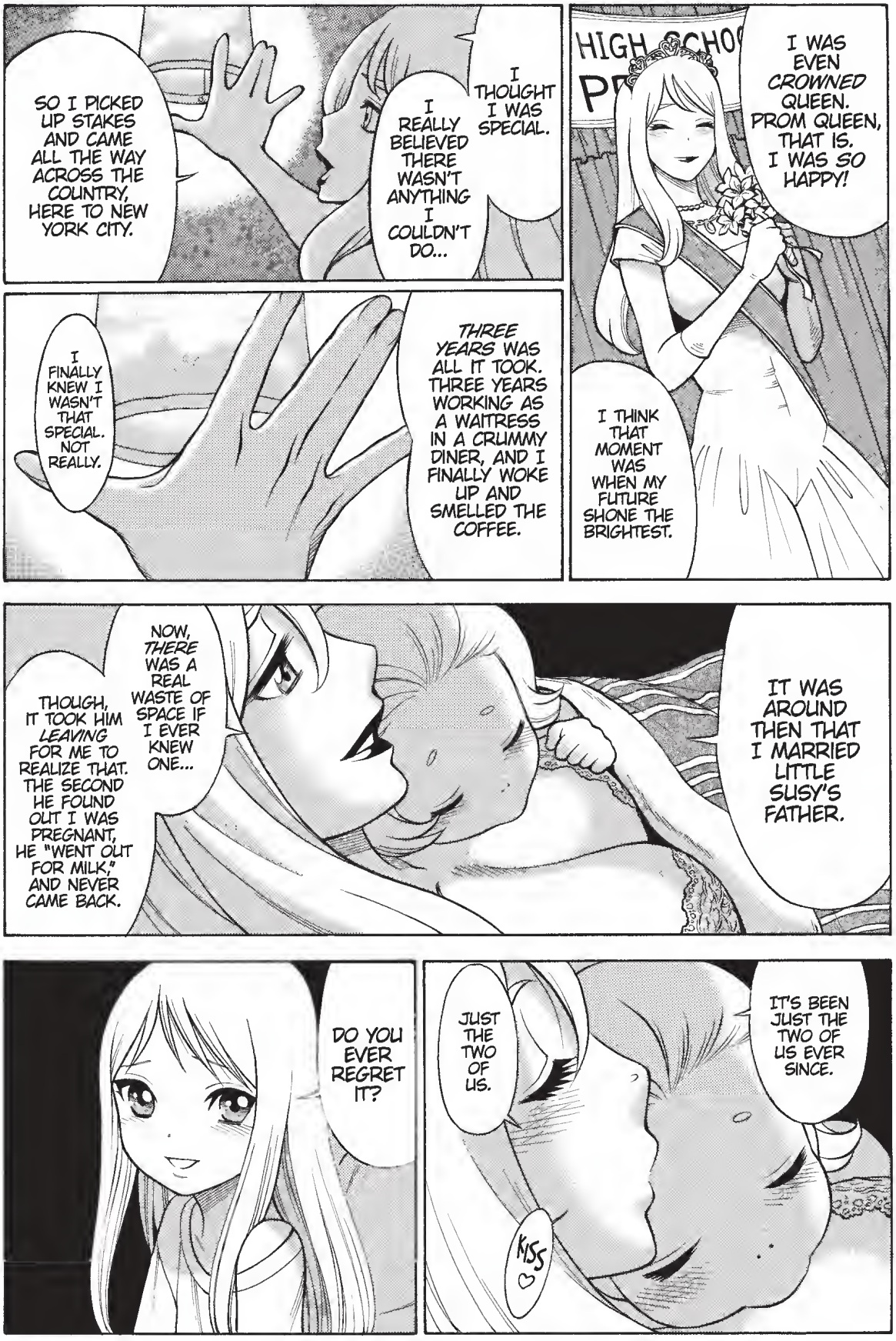


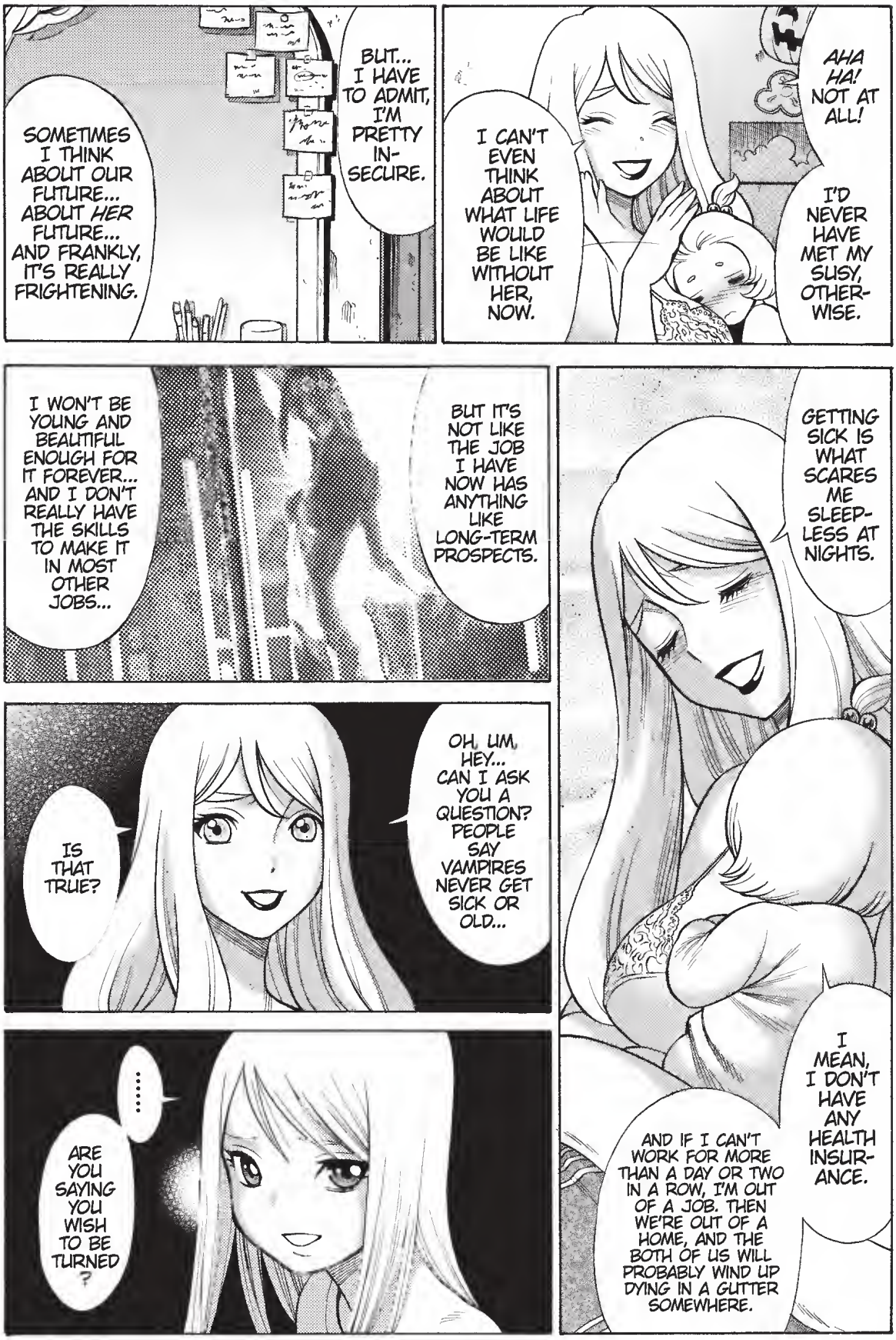

WAY, WAY FAR AWAY, ON THE VERY TIP OF MONTANA, THERE'S A TOWN CALLED KINGSVILLE. IT'S A REALLY, REALLY, TEENY-WEENY, LITTLE PLACE.
ABOUT THE ONLY THING AROUND THERE TO DO WAS WATCH OR PLAY FOOTBALL.
ALL OF THE BOYS WERE ON THE FOOTBALL TEAM, OR WANTED TO BE. IF YOU DIDN'T, EVERYBODY THOUGHT YOU WERE SOME GIRLY-BOY LOSER.

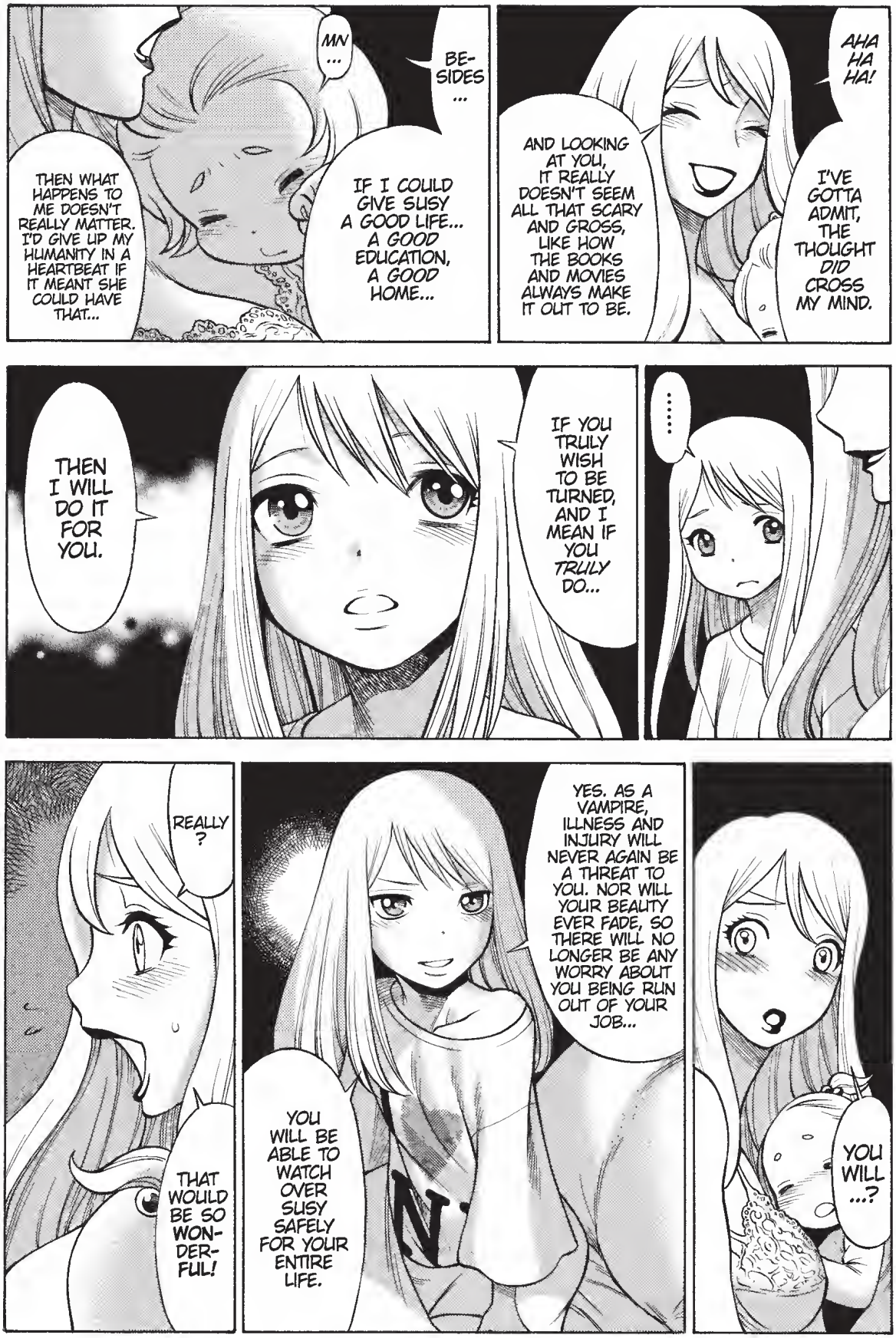
HEH HEH HEH. IS IT THAT OBVIOUS?
YEP! I WAS. NOT ONLY THAT, I WAS THE MOST POPULAR ONE IN THE WHOLE CLASS! EVERYBODY LOVED WATCHING MY DOUBLE BACKFLIP!
NOBODY ELSE COULD EVEN HOLD A CANDLE TO ME. ALL THE BOYS LOVED ME, AND ALL THE GIRLS ADORED ME.

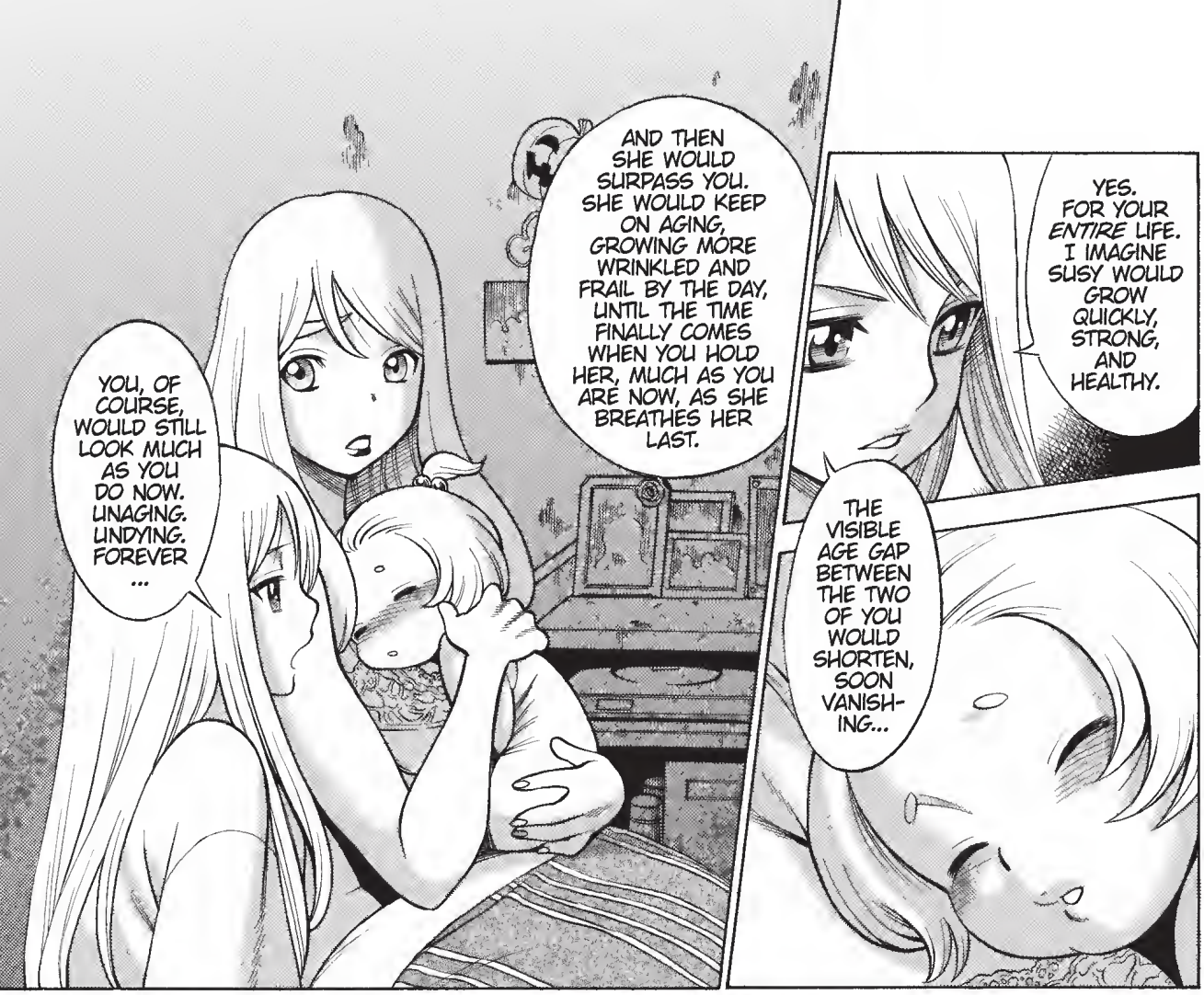

YOU WERE A FOOT-BALL CHEER-LEADER, THEN.

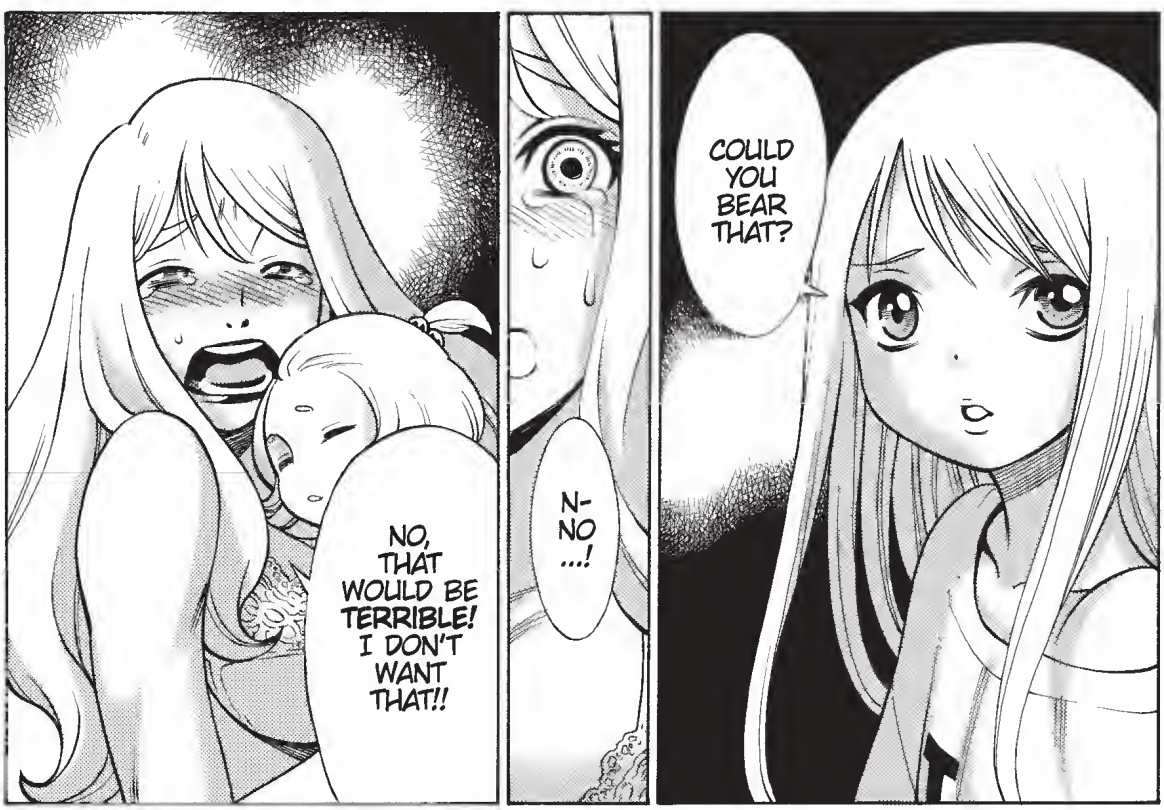

HEE HEE! I ASSUME YOUR BOY-FRIEND WAS THE TEAM CAPTAIN?
RIGHT AGAIN!!
THE TWO OF US PARADED AROUND THE SCHOOL LIKE IT WAS OUR OWN KINGDOM. IT WAS, REALLY. I WAS A QUEEN, JUST LIKE YOU! ♡

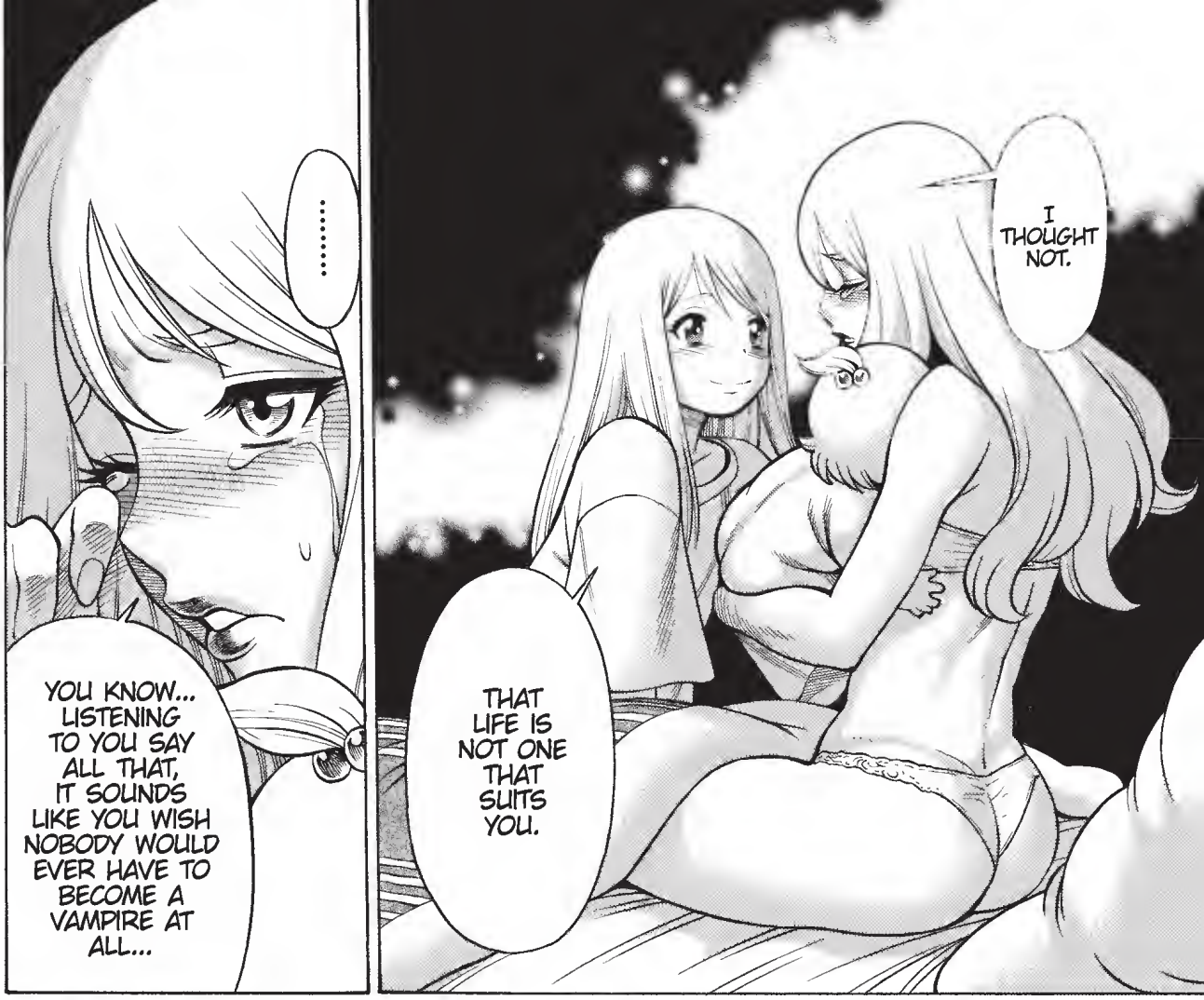

I THOUGHT I WAS SPECIAL.
I REALLY BELIEVED THERE WASN'T ANYTHING I COULDN'T DO...
SO I PICKED UP STAKES AND CAME ALL THE WAY ACROSS THE COUNTRY, HERE TO NEW YORK CITY.
I WAS EVEN CROWNED QUEEN. PROM QUEEN, THAT IS. I WAS SO HAPPY!
I THINK THAT MOMENT WAS WHEN MY FUTURE SHONE THE BRIGHTEST.
THREE YEARS WAS ALL IT TOOK. THREE YEARS WORKING AS A WAITRESS IN A CRUMMY DINER, AND I FINALLY WOKE UP AND SMELLED THE COFFEE.
I FINALLY KNEW I WASN'T THAT SPECIAL. NOT REALLY.
IT WAS AROUND THEN THAT I MARRIED LITTLE SUSY'S FATHER.
NOW, THERE WAS A REAL WASTE OF SPACE IF I EVER KNEW ONE...
THOUGH, IT TOOK HIM LEAVING FOR ME TO REALIZE THAT. THE SECOND HE FOUND OUT I WAS PREGNANT, HE "WENT OUT FOR MILK," AND NEVER CAME BACK.
IT'S BEEN JUST THE TWO OF US EVER SINCE.
JUST THE TWO OF US.
KISS
DO YOU EVER REGRET IT?

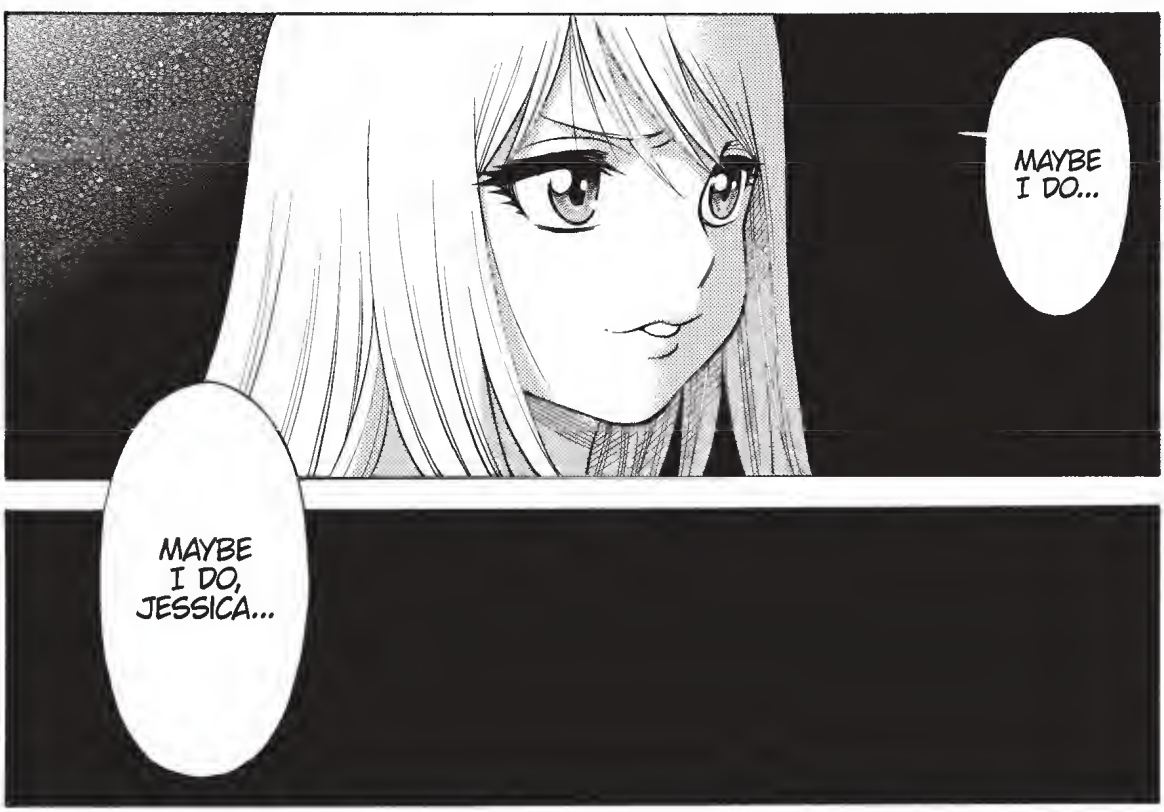

SOMETIMES I THINK ABOUT OUR FUTURE... ABOUT *HER* FUTURE... AND FRANKLY, IT'S REALLY FRIGHTENING.
BUT... I HAVE TO ADMIT, I'M PRETTY IN-SECURE.
I CAN'T EVEN THINK ABOUT WHAT LIFE WOULD BE LIKE WITHOUT HER, NOW.
AHA HA! NOT AT ALL!
I'D NEVER HAVE MET MY SUSY, OTHER-WISE.
I WON'T BE YOUNG AND BEAUTIFUL ENOUGH FOR IT FOREVER... AND I DON'T REALLY HAVE THE SKILLS TO MAKE IT IN MOST OTHER JOBS...
BUT IT'S NOT LIKE THE JOB I HAVE NOW HAS ANYTHING LIKE LONG-TERM PROSPECTS.
GETTING SICK IS WHAT SCARES ME SLEEP-LESS AT NIGHTS.
OH, UM, HEY... CAN I ASK YOU A QUESTION? PEOPLE SAY VAMPIRES NEVER GET SICK OR OLD...
IS THAT TRUE?
I MEAN, I DON'T HAVE ANY HEALTH INSUR-ANCE.
AND IF I CAN'T WORK FOR MORE THAN A DAY OR TWO IN A ROW, I'M OUT OF A JOB. THEN WE'RE OUT OF A HOME, AND THE BOTH OF US WILL PROBABLY WIND UP DYING IN A GUTTER SOMEWHERE.
.....
ARE YOU SAYING YOU WISH TO BE TURNED ?

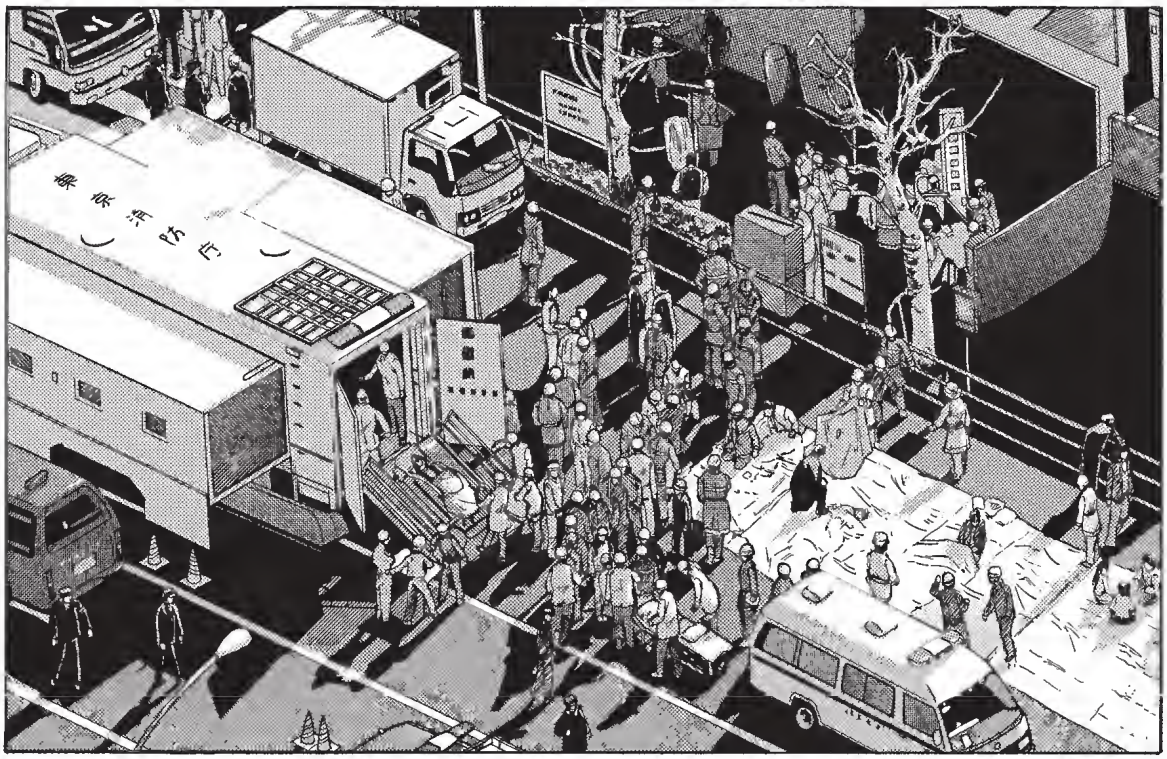

MN...
BE-SIDES...
IF I COULD GIVE SUSY A GOOD LIFE... A GOOD EDUCATION, A GOOD HOME...
THEN WHAT HAPPENS TO ME DOESN'T REALLY MATTER. I'D GIVE UP MY HUMANITY IN A HEARTBEAT IF IT MEANT SHE COULD HAVE THAT...
AHA HA HA!
I'VE GOTTA ADMIT, THE THOUGHT DID CROSS MY MIND.
AND LOOKING AT YOU, IT REALLY DOESN'T SEEM ALL THAT SCARY AND GROSS, LIKE HOW THE BOOKS AND MOVIES ALWAYS MAKE IT OUT TO BE.
IF YOU TRULY WISH TO BE TURNED, AND I MEAN IF YOU TRULY DO...
THEN I WILL DO IT FOR YOU.
.....
REALLY?
THAT WOULD BE SO WON-DER-FUL!
YES. AS A VAMPIRE, ILLNESS AND INJURY WILL NEVER AGAIN BE A THREAT TO YOU. NOR WILL YOUR BEAUTY EVER FADE, SO THERE WILL NO LONGER BE ANY WORRY ABOUT YOU BEING RUN OUT OF YOUR JOB...
YOU WILL BE ABLE TO WATCH OVER SUSY SAFELY FOR YOUR ENTIRE LIFE.
YOU WILL ...?


YES. FOR YOUR *ENTIRE* LIFE. I IMAGINE SUSY WOULD GROW QUICKLY, STRONG, AND HEALTHY.
THE VISIBLE AGE GAP BETWEEN THE TWO OF YOU WOULD SHORTEN, SOON VANISH-ING...
AND THEN SHE WOULD SURPASS YOU. SHE WOULD KEEP ON AGING, GROWING MORE WRINKLED AND FRAIL BY THE DAY, UNTIL THE TIME FINALLY COMES WHEN YOU HOLD HER, MUCH AS YOU ARE NOW, AS SHE BREATHES HER LAST.
YOU, OF COURSE, WOULD STILL LOOK MUCH AS YOU DO NOW. UNAGING. UNDYING. FOREVER ...

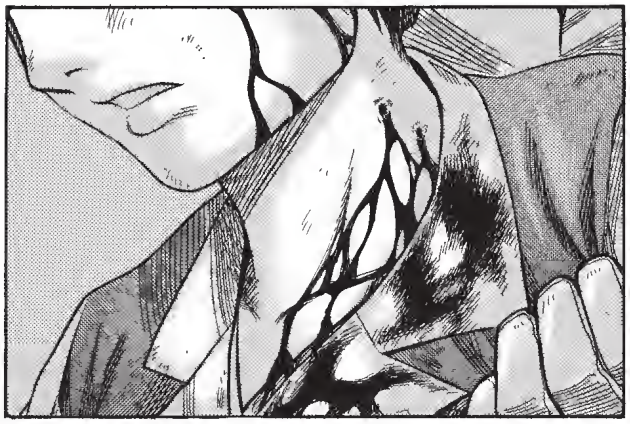

COULD YOU BEAR THAT?
N-NO ...!
NO, THAT WOULD BE **TERRIBLE!** I DON'T WANT THAT!!


I THOUGHT NOT.
THAT LIFE IS NOT ONE THAT SUITS YOU.
.....
YOU KNOW... LISTENING TO YOU SAY ALL THAT, IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU WISH NOBODY WOULD EVER HAVE TO BECOME A VAMPIRE AT ALL...


MAYBE I DO...
MAYBE I DO, JESSICA...

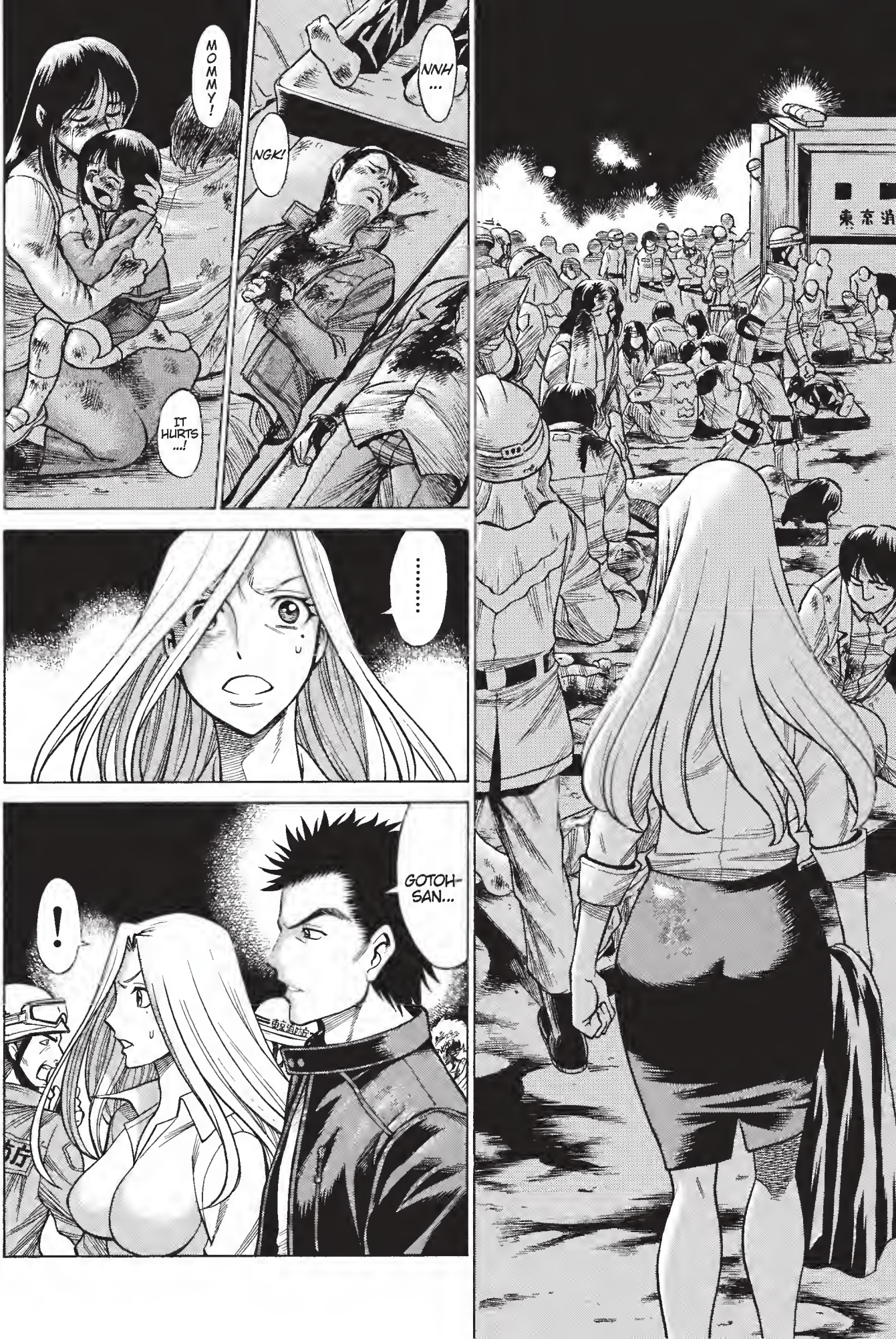

横浜市消防局

東京消防庁



Chapter 58: Pandemic

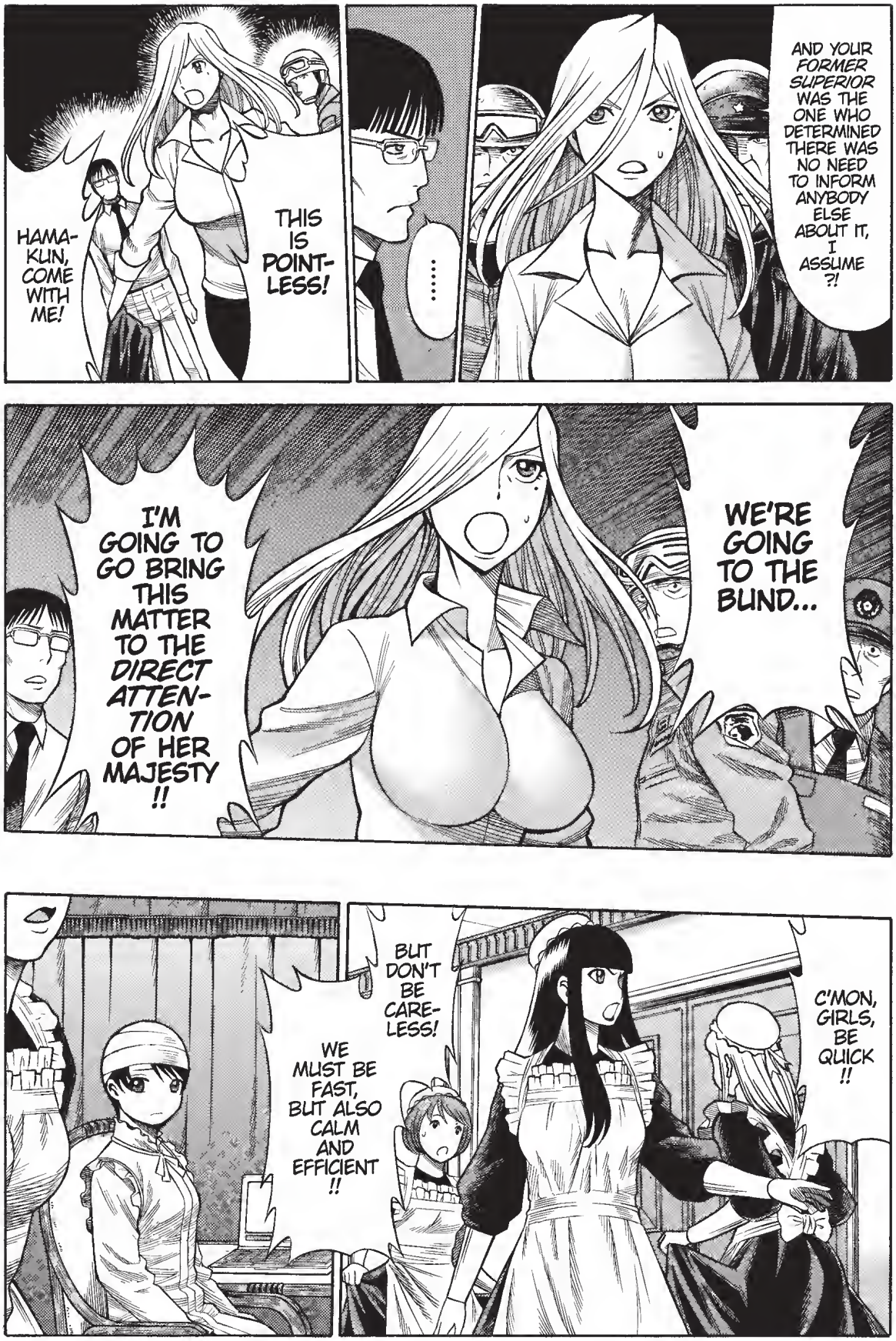
救護所
東京消防庁

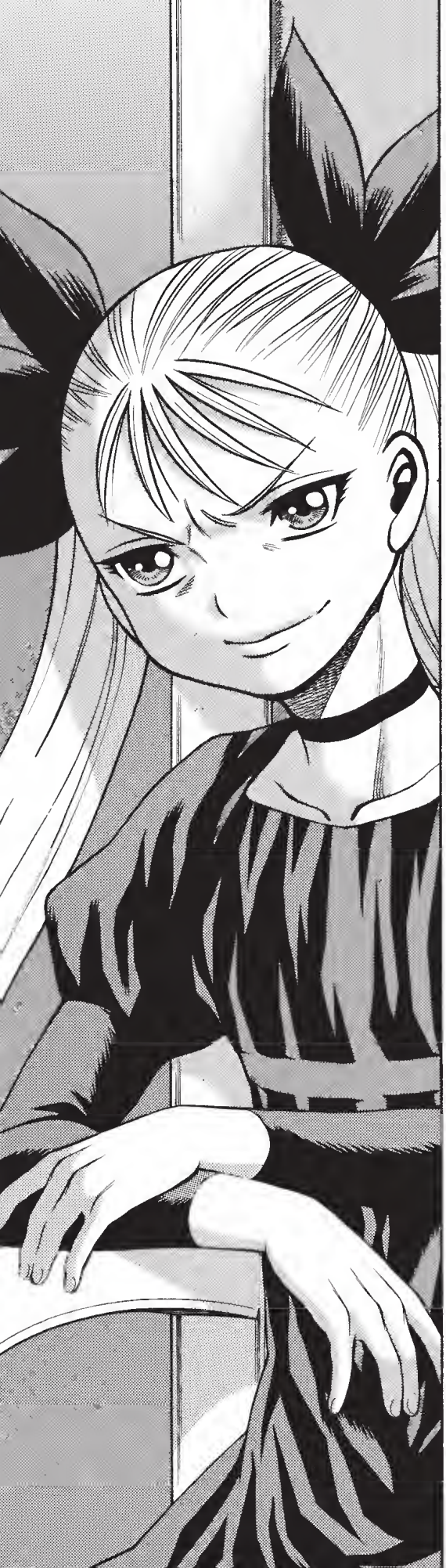

MOMMY!
IT HURTS...!
NGK!
NNH...
.....
!
GOTOH-SAN...

OH, NOW SOME-ONE DECIDES TO SHOW UP!!
CAN'T YOU TELL WHAT HAPPENED JUST BY LOOKING AROUND? IT SHOULD BE PRETTY DAMN OBVIOUS!!
AND I NEED TO KNOW WHAT ON EARTH HAP-PENED HERE!!
MY NAME IS GOTOH, AND I AM FROM THE SPECIAL DISTRICT AFFAIRS OFFICE. I NEED TO SPEAK TO THE PERSON IN CHARGE!
THERE IS A VACCINE THAT CAN CURE VAMPIRE BITES, AND IT IS ON ITS WAY HERE, RIGHT NOW.
NONE OF THE VICTIMS HERE WILL BE TURNED INTO VAMPIRES. THEY WILL BE FINE!!
HOW COULD YOU LET THEM JUST WALTZ OVER HERE AND TURN AN UNDER-GROUND SHOPPING MALL INTO A SNACK BAR?!
I THOUGHT IT WAS YOU GUYS' JOB TO KEEP THOSE MONSTERS PENNED UP ON THEIR ISLAND, AWAY FROM THE REST OF US! DID SOMEBODY FALL ASLEEP AT THE GATE OR SOMETHING ?!
WHAT OF THE VAMPIRES INVOLVED IN THE ASSAULT? WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM?!

*"SAT" stands for Special Assault Team. Think SWAT team.

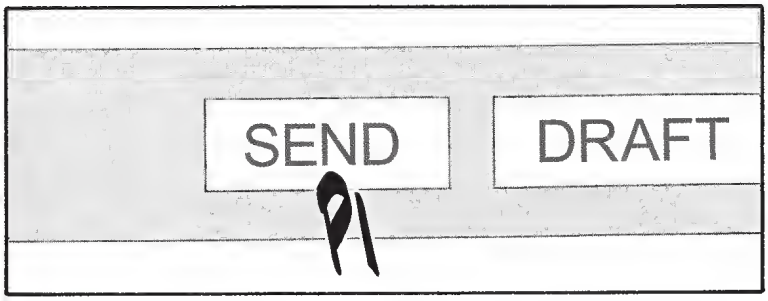
SHUNK
SO WHAT THE HELL ARE WE SUPPOSED TO DO, THEN ?!!
UH, I'M FROM THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH, LABOR AND WELFARE! I HAVE THE VACCINE!!
THERE ISN'T EVEN ENOUGH FOR A HUNDRED PEOPLE IN HERE...
WELL, WE'VE GOT OVER THREE HUNDRED VICTIMS! NOW WHAT?!
THE BUND GENERALLY DONATES A CONTAINER OF VACCINE TO THE MINISTRY EVERY THREE MONTHS. THIS IS THE ENTIRETY OF THE LATEST BATCH WE RECEIVED FROM THEM.
WELL, ALL THAT'S STILL USEABLE FROM THAT BATCH, ANYWAY. EVERYTHING ELSE WE HAVE IS PAST ITS EXPIRATION DATE...
WHAT?! NONE OF THE REPORTS WE RECEIVED SAID ANYTHING ABOUT THAT!!
THAT IS BECAUSE ANYTHING PERTAINING TO THE VAMPIRISM VACCINE HAS ALWAYS BEEN WITHIN THE SOLE JURISDICTION OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH...


HAMA-KUN, COME WITH ME!
THIS IS POINT-LESS!
……
AND YOUR FORMER SUPERIOR WAS THE ONE WHO DETERMINED THERE WAS NO NEED TO INFORM ANYBODY ELSE ABOUT IT, I ASSUME ?!
I'M GOING TO GO BRING THIS MATTER TO THE DIRECT ATTEN-TION OF HER MAJESTY !!
WE'RE GOING TO THE BUND...
WE MUST BE FAST, BUT ALSO CALM AND EFFICIENT !!
BUT DON'T BE CARE-LESS!
C'MON, GIRLS, BE QUICK !!



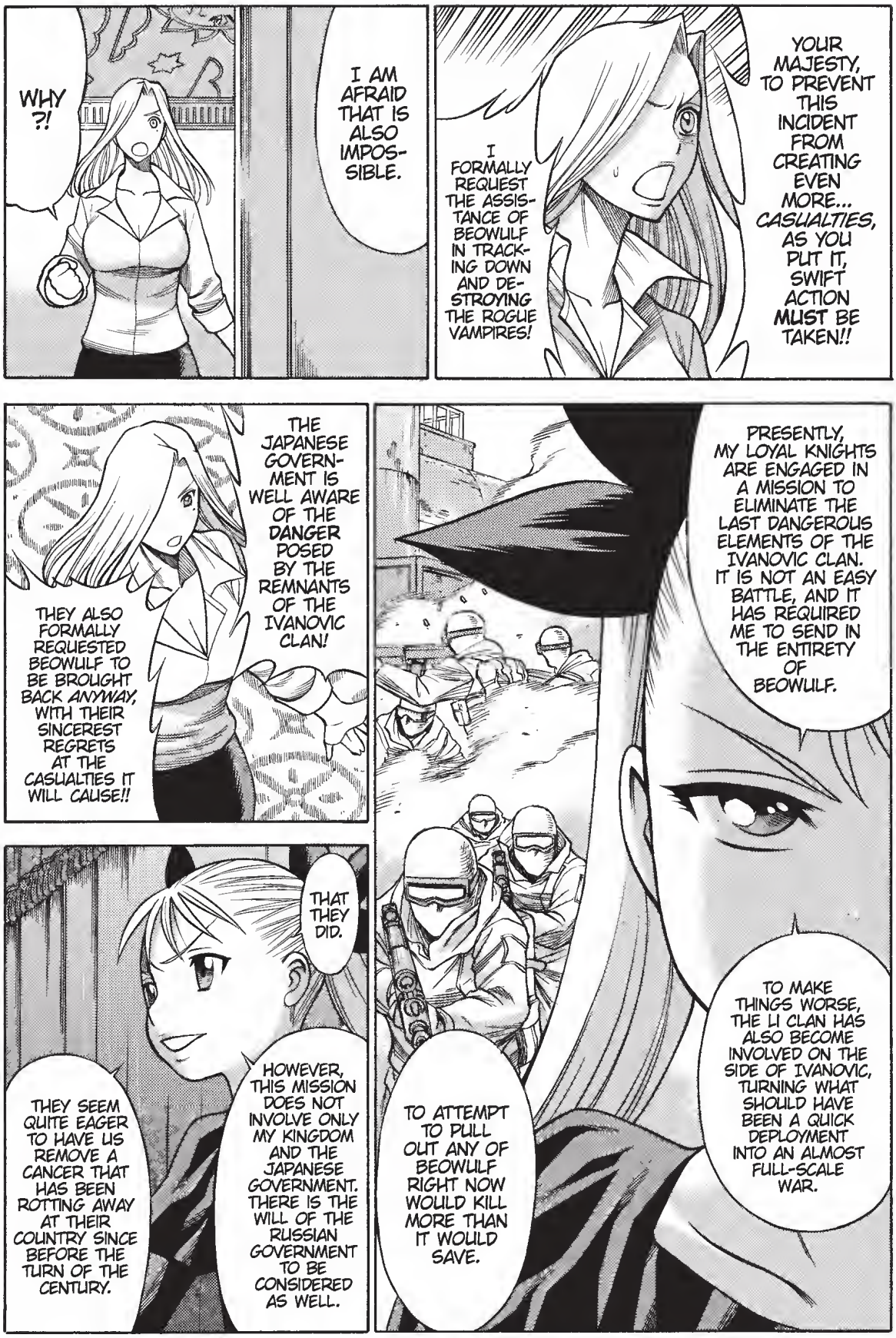
INA-HIME
IS NOT R
SHE'S A F

TKK
TKK

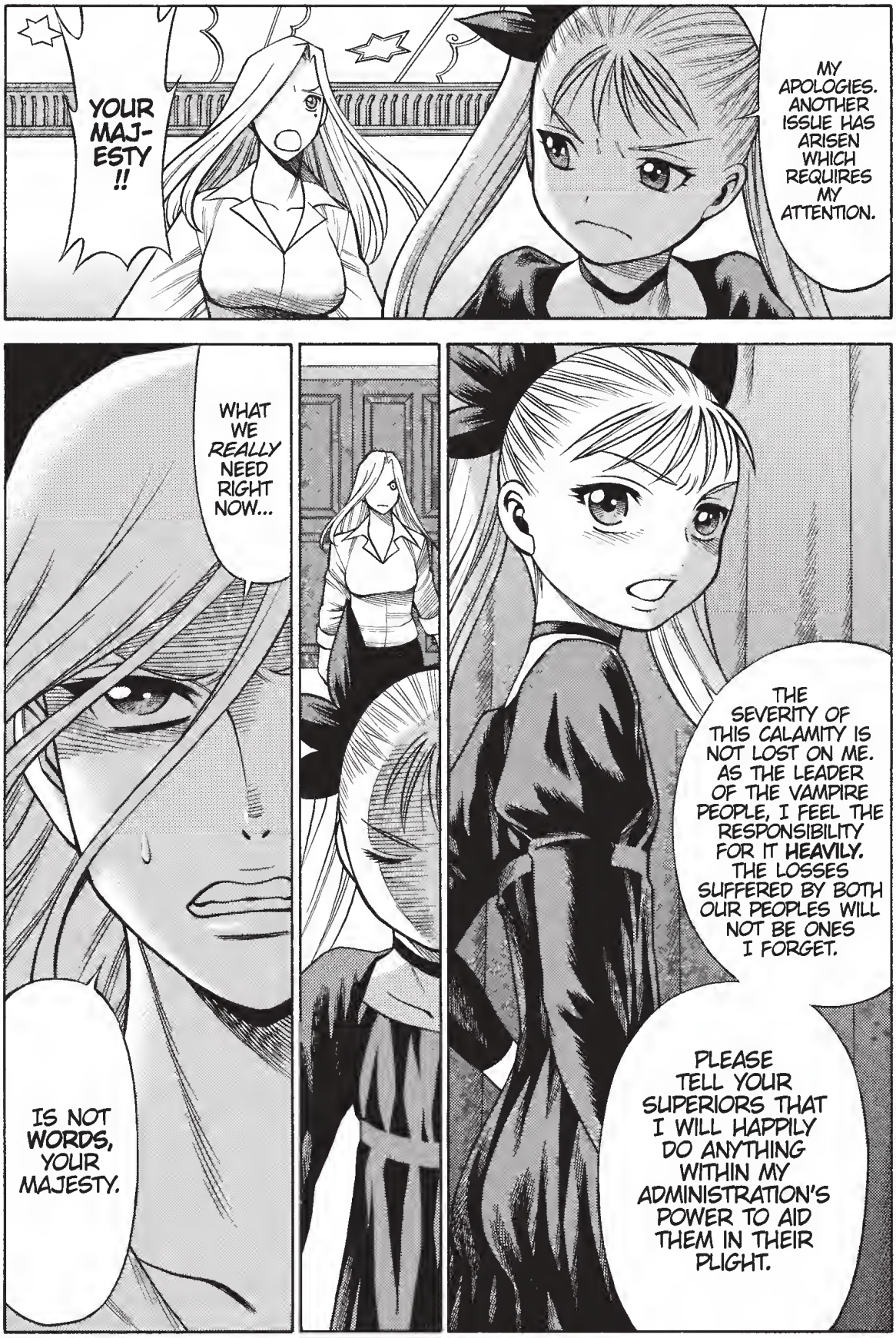


Read DIVE IN THE VAMPIRE BUND VOL. 1 for all the details!

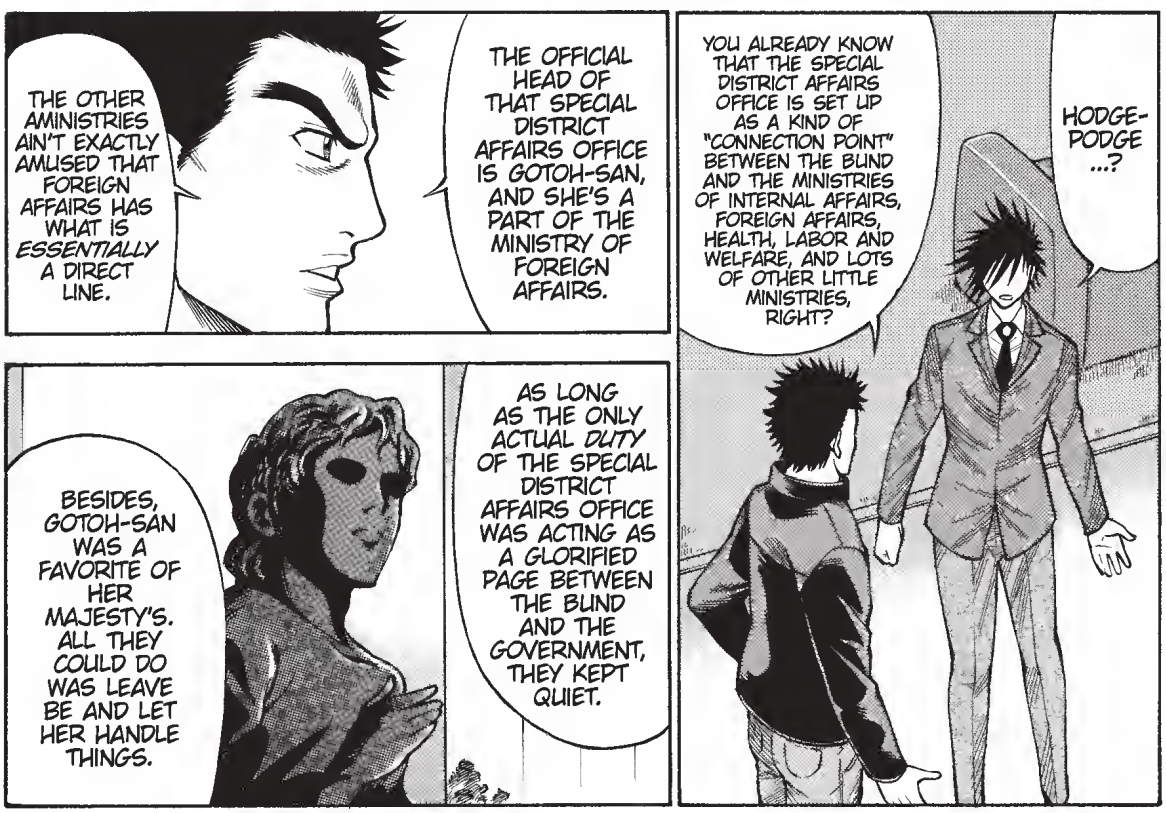
.....
OF COURSE, WE IMMEDIATELY APPLIED TO HAVE SOME OF OUR RESERVES STORED IN OTHER COUNTRIES SENT HERE TO FILL THE VOID.
HOWEVER, THE VACCINE IS A VERY DELICATE THING INDEED...
EVEN THE TINIEST CHANGE IN PRESSURE OR TEMPERATURE CAN RENDER IT *COMPLETELY USELESS*. TRANSPORTING IT IS EXCEEDINGLY DIFFICULT, AND VERY TIME-CONSUMING.
THEN ...
THEN WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE VICTIMS ?
THE BLIND WILL ACCEPT YOUR *CASUALTIES* GLADLY, WITH OPEN ARMS.
.....


WHY ?!
I AM AFRAID THAT IS ALSO IMPOSSIBLE.
I FORMALLY REQUEST THE ASSISTANCE OF BEOWULF IN TRACKING DOWN AND DESTROYING THE ROGUE VAMPIRES!
YOUR MAJESTY, TO PREVENT THIS INCIDENT FROM CREATING EVEN MORE... CASUALTIES, AS YOU PUT IT, SWIFT ACTION MUST BE TAKEN!!
THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT IS WELL AWARE OF THE DANGER POSED BY THE REMNANTS OF THE IVANOVIC CLAN!
THEY ALSO FORMALLY REQUESTED BEOWULF TO BE BROUGHT BACK ANYWAY, WITH THEIR SINCEREST REGRETS AT THE CASUALTIES IT WILL CAUSE!!
PRESENTLY, MY LOYAL KNIGHTS ARE ENGAGED IN A MISSION TO ELIMINATE THE LAST DANGEROUS ELEMENTS OF THE IVANOVIC CLAN. IT IS NOT AN EASY BATTLE, AND IT HAS REQUIRED ME TO SEND IN THE ENTIRETY OF BEOWULF.
TO MAKE THINGS WORSE, THE LI CLAN HAS ALSO BECOME INVOLVED ON THE SIDE OF IVANOVIC, TURNING WHAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN A QUICK DEPLOYMENT INTO AN ALMOST FULL-SCALE WAR.
TO ATTEMPT TO PULL OUT ANY OF BEOWULF RIGHT NOW WOULD KILL MORE THAN IT WOULD SAVE.
THAT THEY DID.
HOWEVER, THIS MISSION DOES NOT INVOLVE ONLY MY KINGDOM AND THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT. THERE IS THE WILL OF THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT TO BE CONSIDERED AS WELL.
THEY SEEM QUITE EAGER TO HAVE US REMOVE A CANCER THAT HAS BEEN ROTTING AWAY AT THEIR COUNTRY SINCE BEFORE THE TURN OF THE CENTURY.

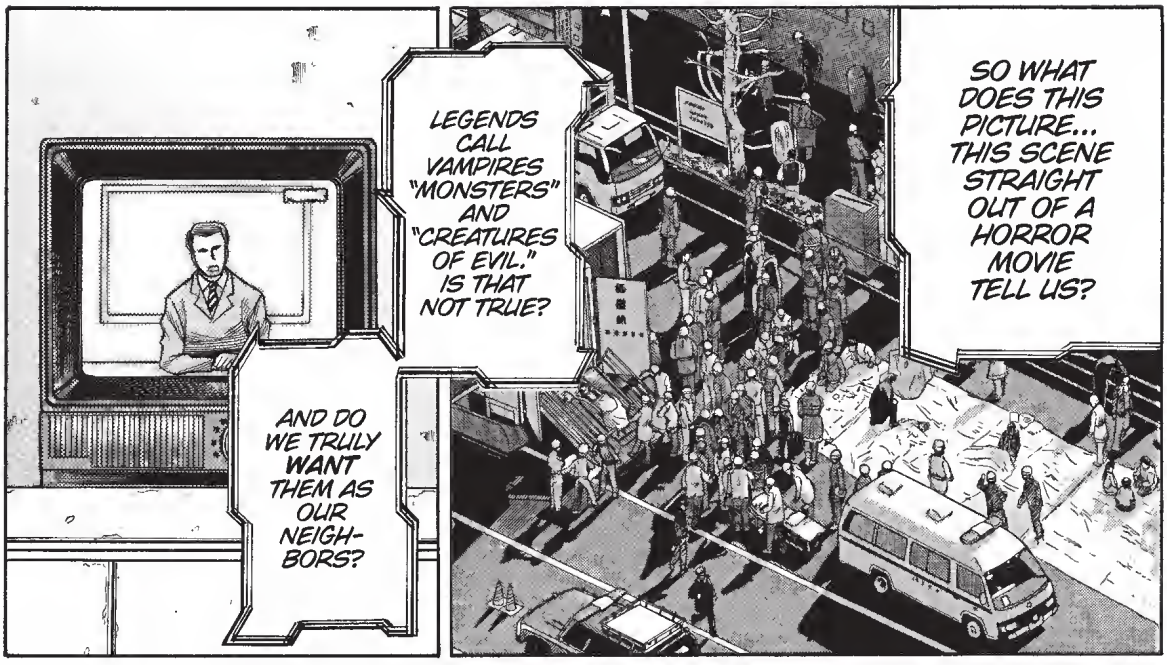
ACCORDINGLY, I WILL MOBILIZE A DIVISION OF MY VGS, THE BUND'S OWN SECURITY FORCE, TO ASSIST YOU WITH THE ROGUES.
OF COURSE NOT. I WOULD NEVER FORCE SUCH AN UNTENABLE POSITION UPON YOU.
SO ARE YOU SAYING THAT WE WILL HAVE ONLY THE LOCAL, HUMAN POLICE FORCES TO USE AGAINST THIS THREAT?!
SO TO DEAL WITH VAMPIRES WHO ESCAPED YOUR ISLAND, YOU PROPOSE TO SEND EVEN MORE VAMPIRES OUTSIDE OF THE BUND?!
THAT WILL ONLY MAKE THINGS WORSE !!
!
YOUR MAJESTY.
IF YOU HAVE ANY OTHER SUGGESTIONS, I WILL GLADLY HEAR THEM.


YOUR MAJ-ESTY !!
MY APOLOGIES. ANOTHER ISSUE HAS ARISEN WHICH REQUIRES MY ATTENTION.
WHAT WE *REALLY* NEED RIGHT NOW...
IS NOT **WORDS**, YOUR MAJESTY.
THE SEVERITY OF THIS CALAMITY IS NOT LOST ON ME. AS THE LEADER OF THE VAMPIRE PEOPLE, I FEEL THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR IT **HEAVILY.** THE LOSSES SUFFERED BY BOTH OUR PEOPLES WILL NOT BE ONES I FORGET.
PLEASE TELL YOUR SUPERIORS THAT I WILL HAPPILY DO ANYTHING WITHIN MY ADMINISTRATION'S POWER TO AID THEM IN THEIR PLIGHT.

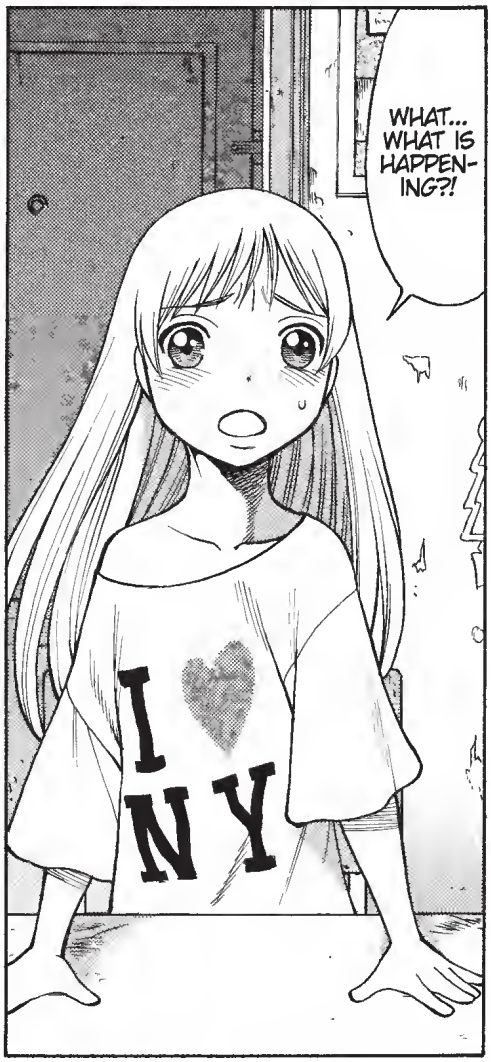
SHEESH...
NEVER EXPECTED THINGS TO GO DOWN THIS FAST.
YEAH. DAMMIT, AND AFTER ALL YOU WENT THROUGH TO GET ME THAT INFO THIS MORNING...
HEY, WE COULDN'T KNOW SOMETHING WOULD HAPPEN TODAY. THAT MILK'S GOOD AND SPILLED NOW, SO NO USE CRYIN' OVER IT.
THE REAL PROBLEM WE'VE GOT RIGHT NOW IS THAT THE SPECIAL DISTRICT AFFAIRS OFFICE IS THE LAST ONE TO KNOW ABOUT ANYTHING GOING ON.
THE WEAK POINT OF OUR LITTLE HODGE-PODGE SETUP HERE JUST GOT HIT HARD.

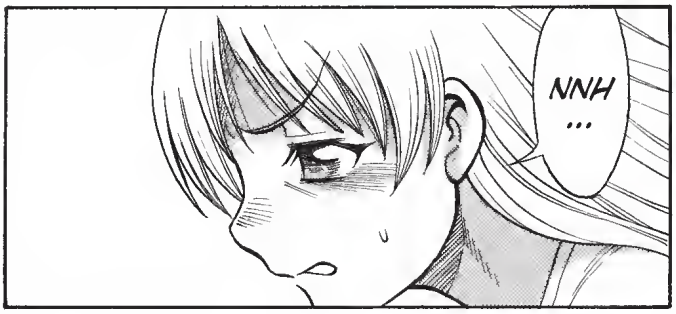

HODGE-PODGE ...?
YOU ALREADY KNOW THAT THE SPECIAL DISTRICT AFFAIRS OFFICE IS SET UP AS A KIND OF "CONNECTION POINT" BETWEEN THE BLIND AND THE MINISTRIES OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS, FOREIGN AFFAIRS, HEALTH, LABOR AND WELFARE, AND LOTS OF OTHER LITTLE MINISTRIES, RIGHT?
THE OFFICIAL HEAD OF THAT SPECIAL DISTRICT AFFAIRS OFFICE IS GOTOH-SAN, AND SHE'S A PART OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.
THE OTHER AMINISTRIES AIN'T EXACTLY AMUSED THAT FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAS WHAT IS ESSENTIALLY A DIRECT LINE.
AS LONG AS THE ONLY ACTUAL DUTY OF THE SPECIAL DISTRICT AFFAIRS OFFICE WAS ACTING AS A GLORIFIED PAGE BETWEEN THE BLIND AND THE GOVERNMENT, THEY KEPT QUIET.
BESIDES, GOTOH-SAN WAS A FAVORITE OF HER MAJESTY'S. ALL THEY COULD DO WAS LEAVE BE AND LET HER HANDLE THINGS.

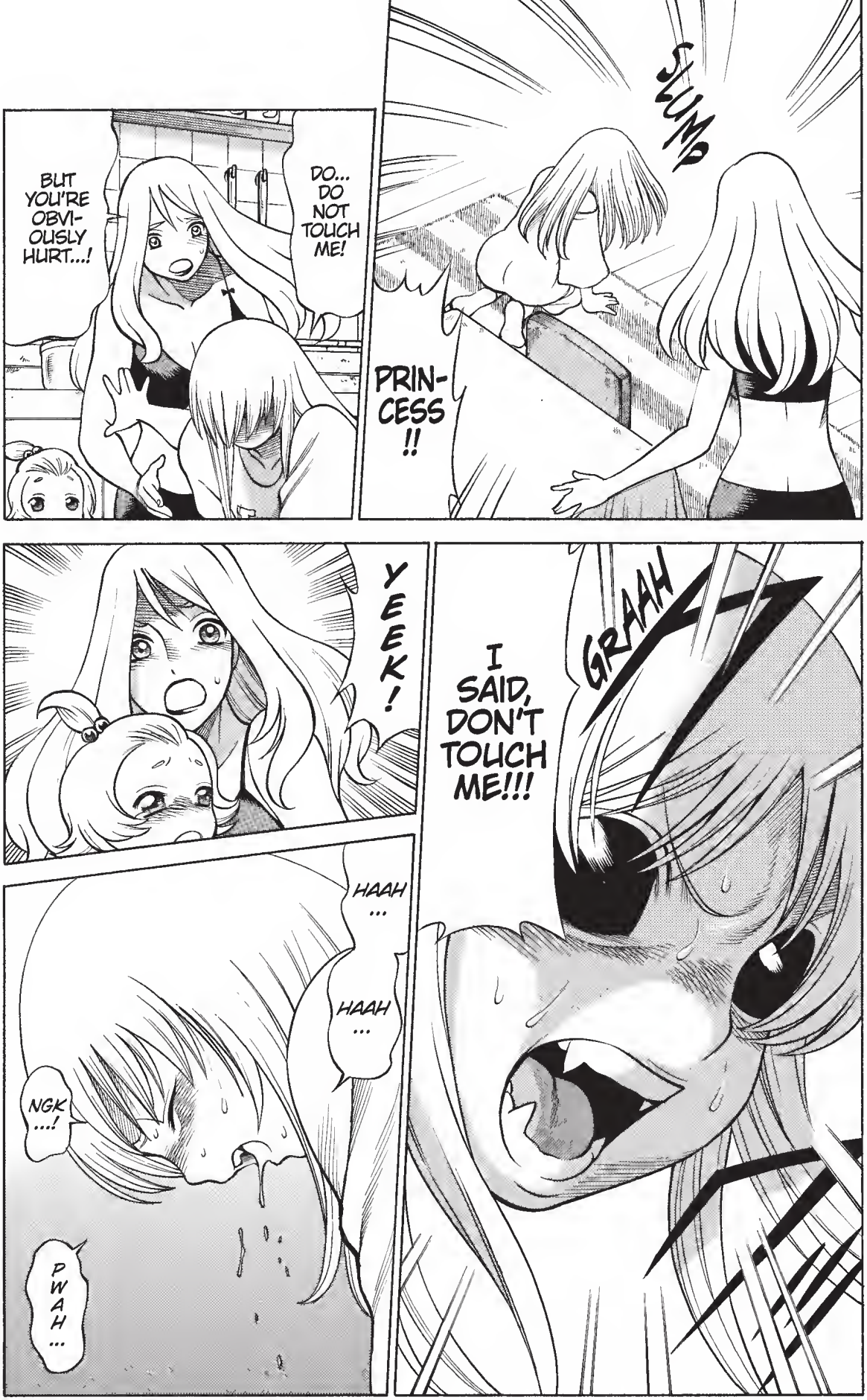
BUT NOW THAT THERE'S BEEN A BIG INCIDENT, ALL THAT RESENTMENT THAT THEY'VE HELD UNDER WRAPS THIS WHOLE TIME IS STARTING TO BUBBLE UP TO THE SURFACE.
CALL IT THE UNINTENDED BARRIERS OF AN OVER-COMPARTMENTALIZED BUREAUCRACY, OR CALL IT PETTY TURF-WARS BETWEEN REGIONAL BARONS. IT'S ESSENTIALLY THE SAME THING.
EVERYBODY'S ACTING TO MAKE THEIR OWN MINISTRY LOOK GOOD, AND TO MAKE DAMN SURE OTHERS DON'T TRESPASS ON "THEIR" TERRITORY.
GOTOH-SAN'S GOT ONE *HELLUVA* UPHILL BATTLE IN FRONT OF HER RIGHT NOW...
HAMA-SAN...
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU'RE A TOTAL BY-STANDER HERE, Y'KNOW.
THIS MESS IS IN YOUR LAP, TOO!
THE VACCINE SHORTAGE... BEOWULF BEING ALL THE WAY IN GODDAMN *RUSSIA*... JUST WHEN WE NEED THEM BOTH.
IT'S ALL TOO NEAT.
TOO *CONVENIENT.* IT'S ALMOST LIKE SOMEONE PLANNED IT, DON'T YOU THINK?

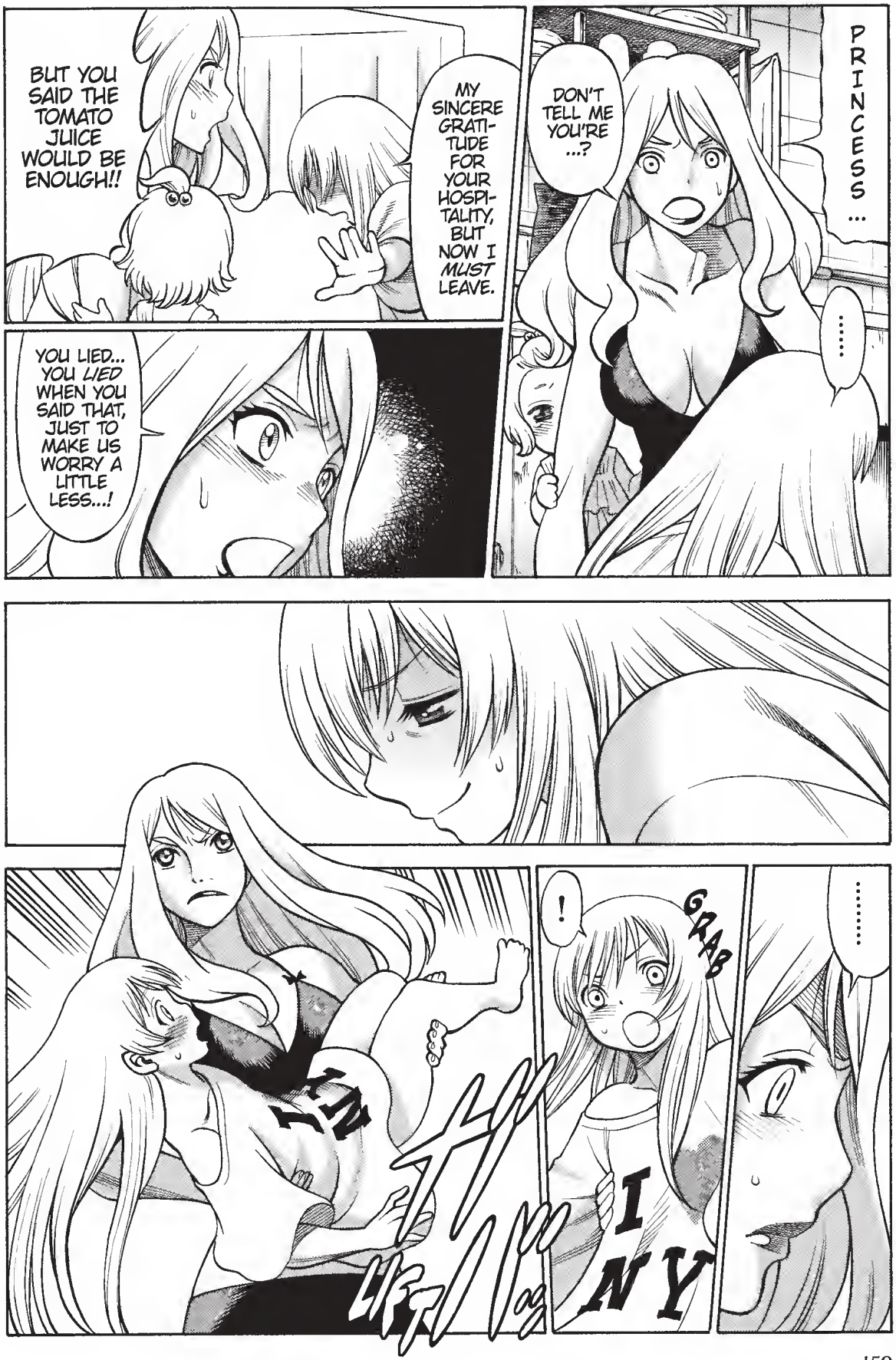

SO WHAT DOES THIS PICTURE... THIS SCENE STRAIGHT OUT OF A HORROR MOVIE TELL US?
LEGENDS CALL VAMPIRES "MONSTERS" AND "CREATURES OF EVIL." IS THAT NOT TRUE?
AND DO WE TRULY WANT THEM AS OUR NEIGH-BORS?

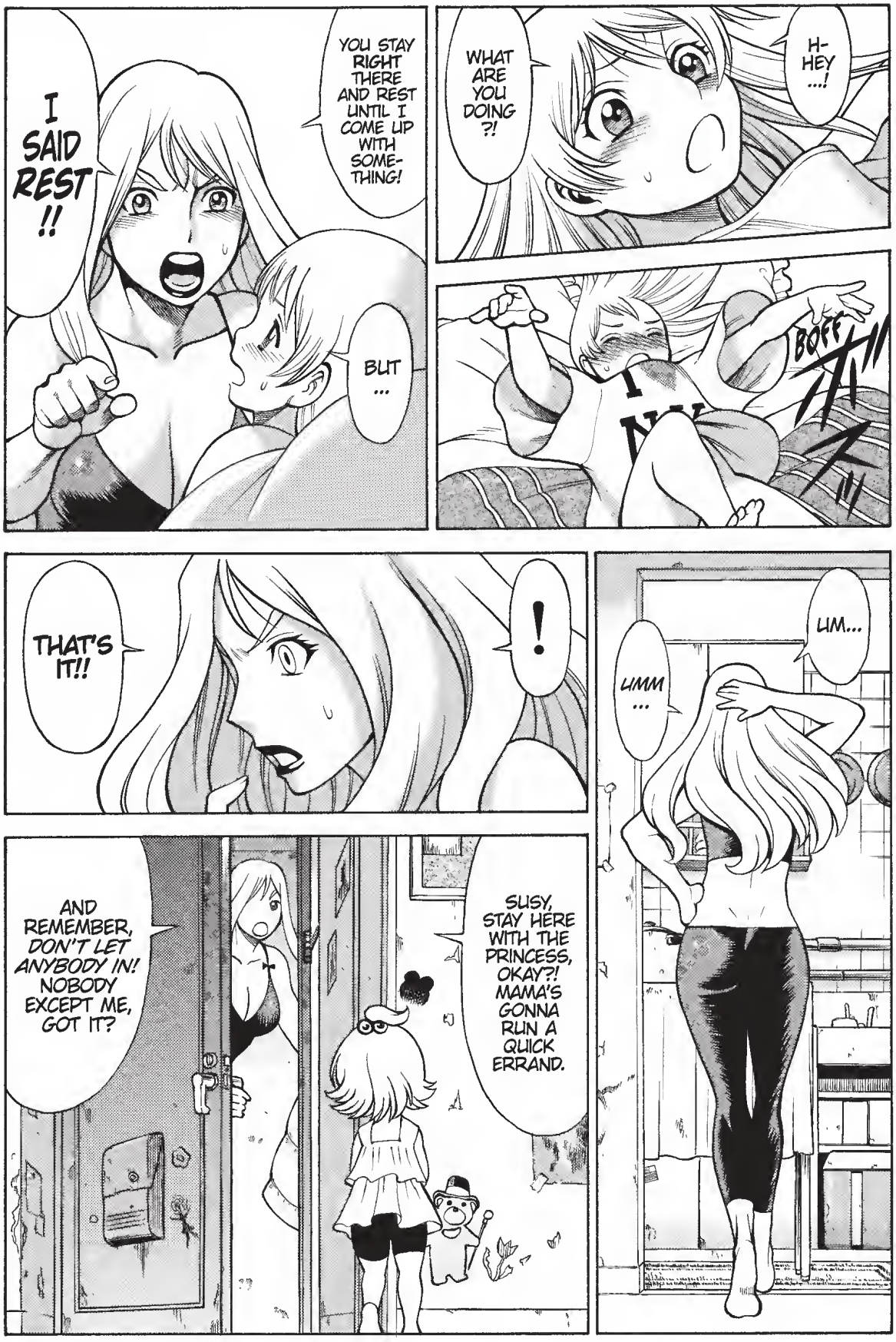
MY KINGDOM NEEDS ME...!
I MUST GO BACK ...!
I MUST GO BACK NOW!
PRIN-CESS ...?


WHAT... WHAT IS HAPPEN-ING?!

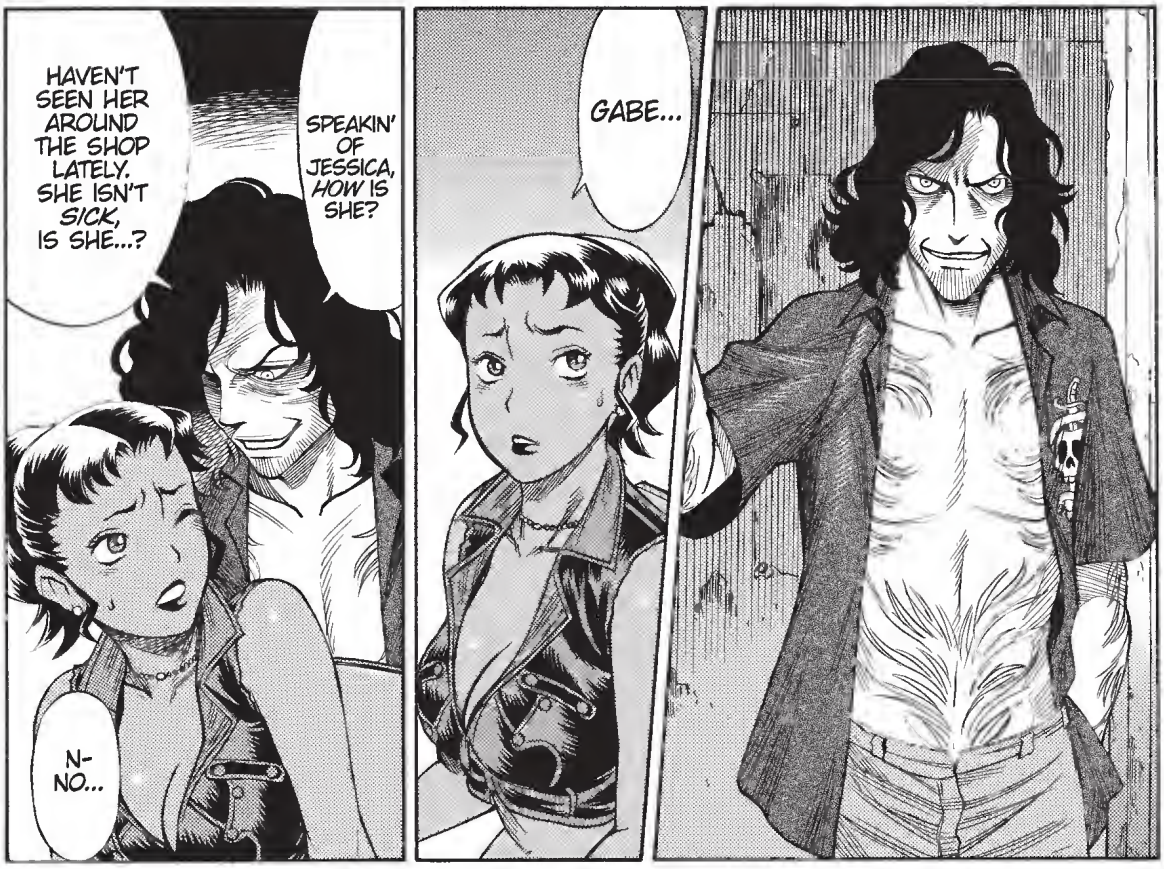

NNH ...

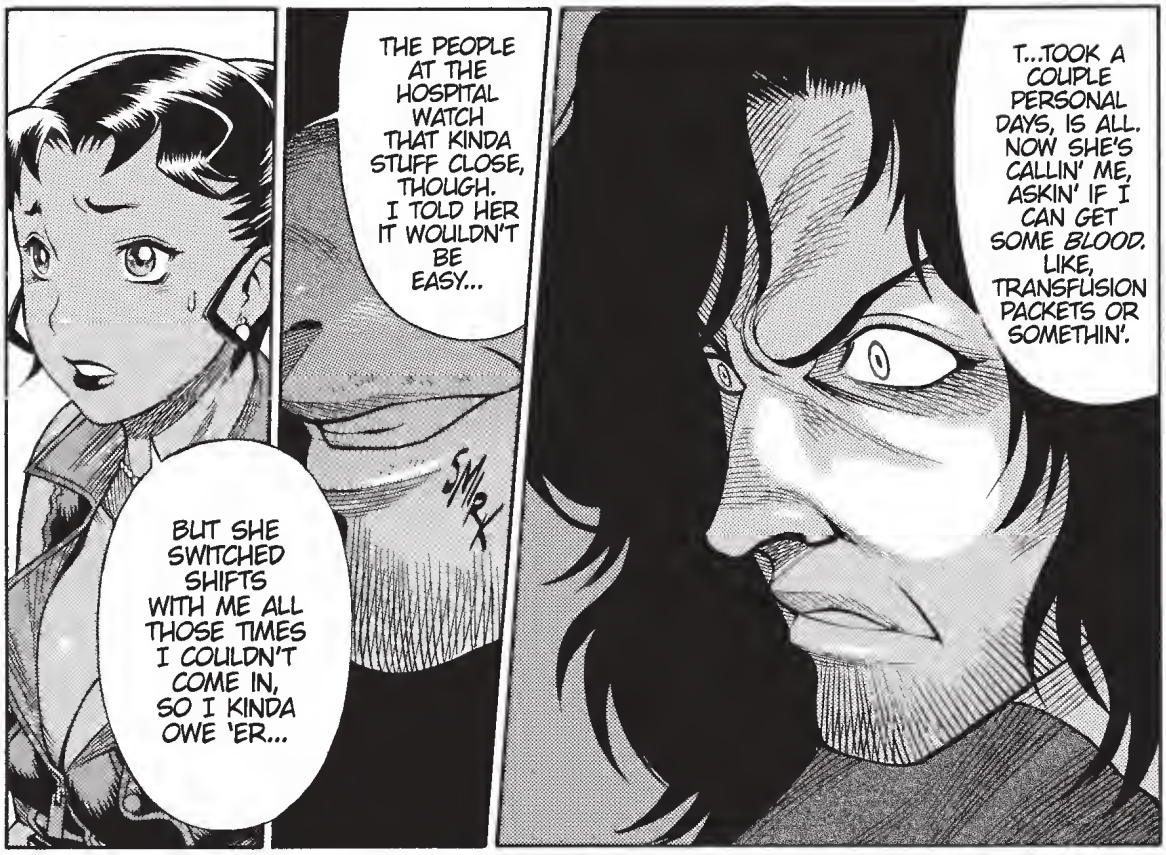

SLUMP
PRIN-
CESS
!!
DO...
DO
NOT
TOUCH
ME!
BUT
YOU'RE
OBVI-
OUSLY
HURT...!
GRAAH
I
SAID,
DON'T
TOUCH
ME!!!
YEEK!
HAAH
...
HAAH
...
NGK
...!
PWA
H
...

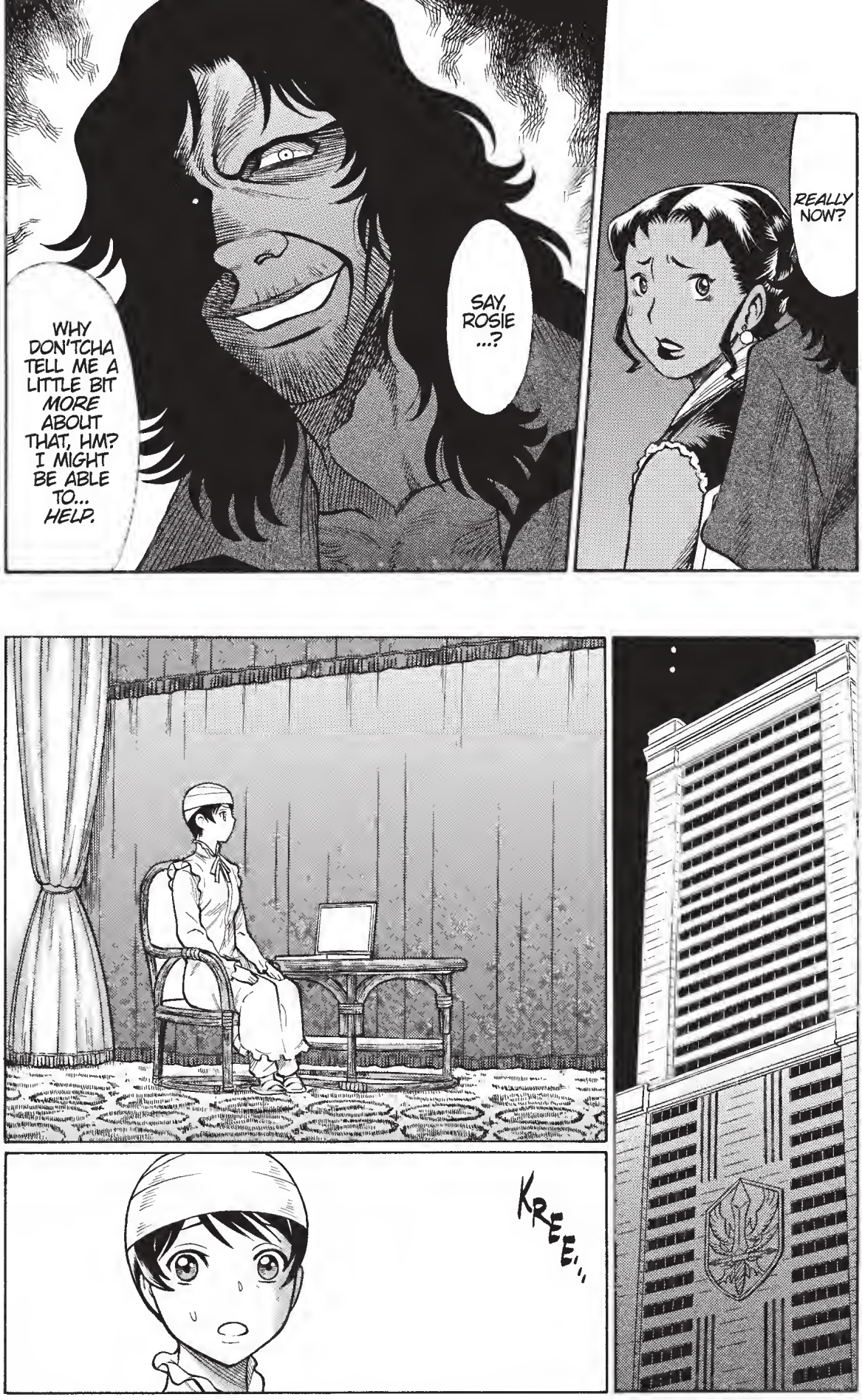

PRINCESS...
.....
DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE ...?
MY SINCERE GRATITUDE FOR YOUR HOSPITALITY, BUT NOW I MUST LEAVE.
BUT YOU SAID THE TOMATO JUICE WOULD BE ENOUGH!!
YOU LIED... YOU LIED WHEN YOU SAID THAT, JUST TO MAKE US WORRY A LITTLE LESS...!
.....
!
GRAB
I N Y


I SAID REST !!
YOU STAY RIGHT THERE AND REST UNTIL I COME UP WITH SOME-THING!
BUT ...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING ?!
H-HEY ...!
BOFF
THAT'S IT!!
!
UMM...
UMMM ...
AND REMEMBER, DON'T LET ANYBODY IN! NOBODY EXCEPT ME, GOT IT?
SUSY, STAY HERE WITH THE PRINCESS, OKAY?! MAMA'S GONNA RUN A QUICK ERRAND.

COULD YOU SEE IF YOU COULD HAVE HIM BRING ME SOME-THING?!
HELLO, ROSIE?! IT'S ME. JESSICA!
LOOK, I'VE GOT A HUGE FAVOR TO ASK. ONE OF YOUR REGULARS IS A NURSE WHO WORKS OVER AT THE GENERAL HOSPITAL, RIGHT? YEAH! THE PIG-HEADED ONE...
WHY WOULD JESSICA NEED *WHAT?*
STRAGGLE
TOK
GAWD ...
WHY THE HELL WOULD JESSICA NEED ONE OF *THOSE* ...?

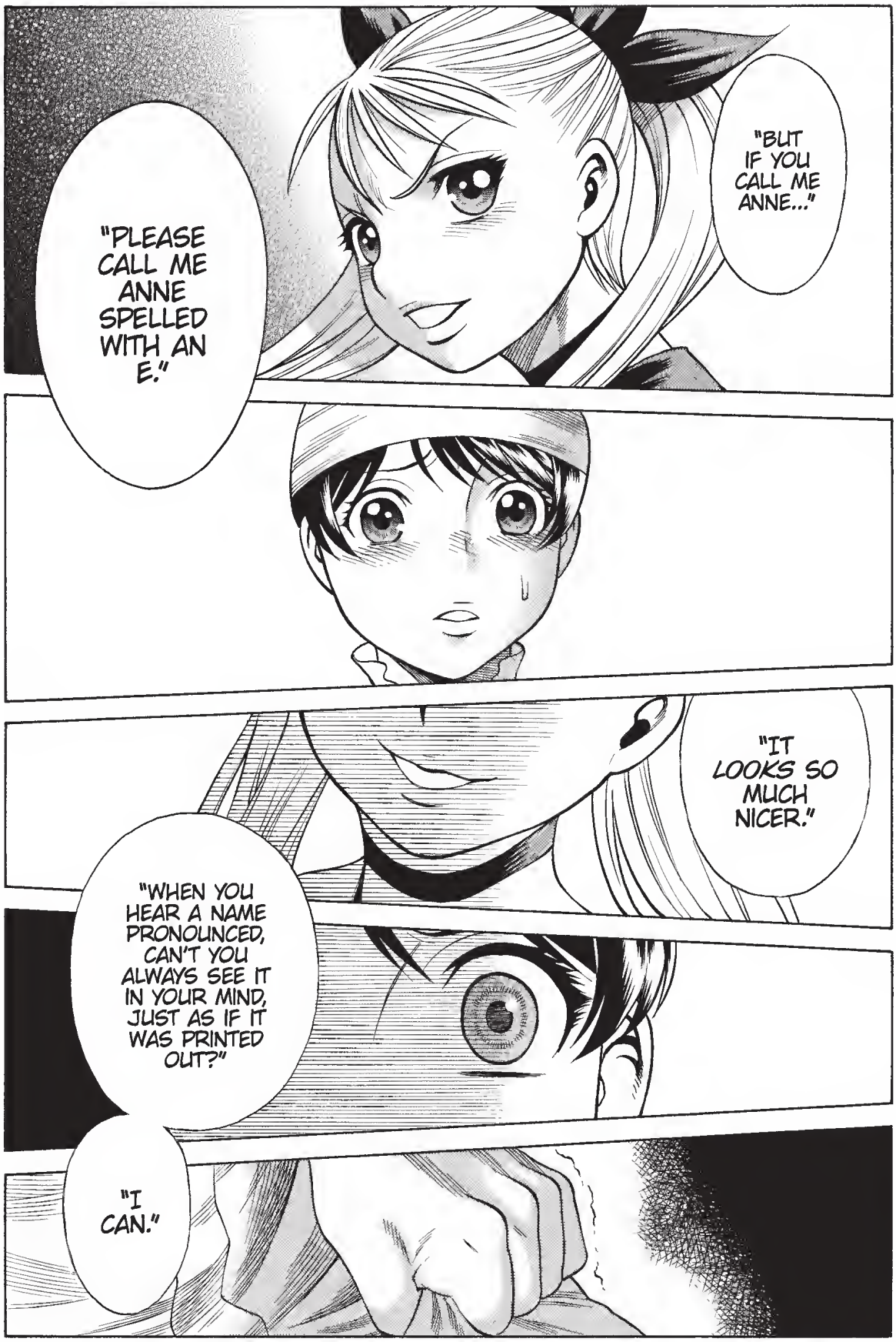

HAVEN'T SEEN HER AROUND THE SHOP LATELY. SHE ISN'T *SICK*, IS SHE...?
SPEAKIN' OF JESSICA, *HOW* IS SHE?
N-NO...
GABE...


BUT SHE SWITCHED SHIFTS WITH ME ALL THOSE TIMES I COULDN'T COME IN, SO I KINDA OWE 'ER...
THE PEOPLE AT THE HOSPITAL WATCH THAT KINDA STUFF CLOSE, THOUGH. I TOLD HER IT WOULDN'T BE EASY...
T...TOOK A COUPLE PERSONAL DAYS, IS ALL. NOW SHE'S CALLIN' ME, ASKIN' IF I CAN GET SOME *BLOOD*. LIKE, TRANSFUSION PACKETS OR SOMETHIN'.


REALLY NOW?
SAY, ROSIE ...?
WHY DON'TCHA TELL ME A LITTLE BIT MORE ABOUT THAT, HM? I MIGHT BE ABLE TO... HELP.
KREE...

.....
WERE YOU HOPING I WAS AKIRA?
WHAT IS WRONG? YOU LOOK A LITTLE PALE...
IS THERE PERHAPS SOMETHING THAT *WORRIES* YOU...?
HEH

"...BUT, OH..."
"PLEASE DO CALL ME CORDELIA."
"IT CAN'T MATTER MUCH TO YOU WHAT YOU CALL ME IF I'M ONLY GOING TO BE HERE A LITTLE WHILE, CAN IT?"
"AND ANNE IS SUCH AN UNROMANTIC NAME."
"I'VE ALWAYS IMAGINED THAT MY NAME WAS CORDELIA--"
"AT LEAST, I ALWAYS HAVE OF LATE YEARS."


"BUT IF YOU CALL ME ANNE..."
"PLEASE CALL ME ANNE SPELLED WITH AN E."
"IT LOOKS SO MUCH NICER."
"WHEN YOU HEAR A NAME PRONOUNCED, CAN'T YOU ALWAYS SEE IT IN YOUR MIND, JUST AS IF IT WAS PRINTED OUT?"
"I CAN."

"Quoted from Anne of Green Gables, by L.M. Montgomery.

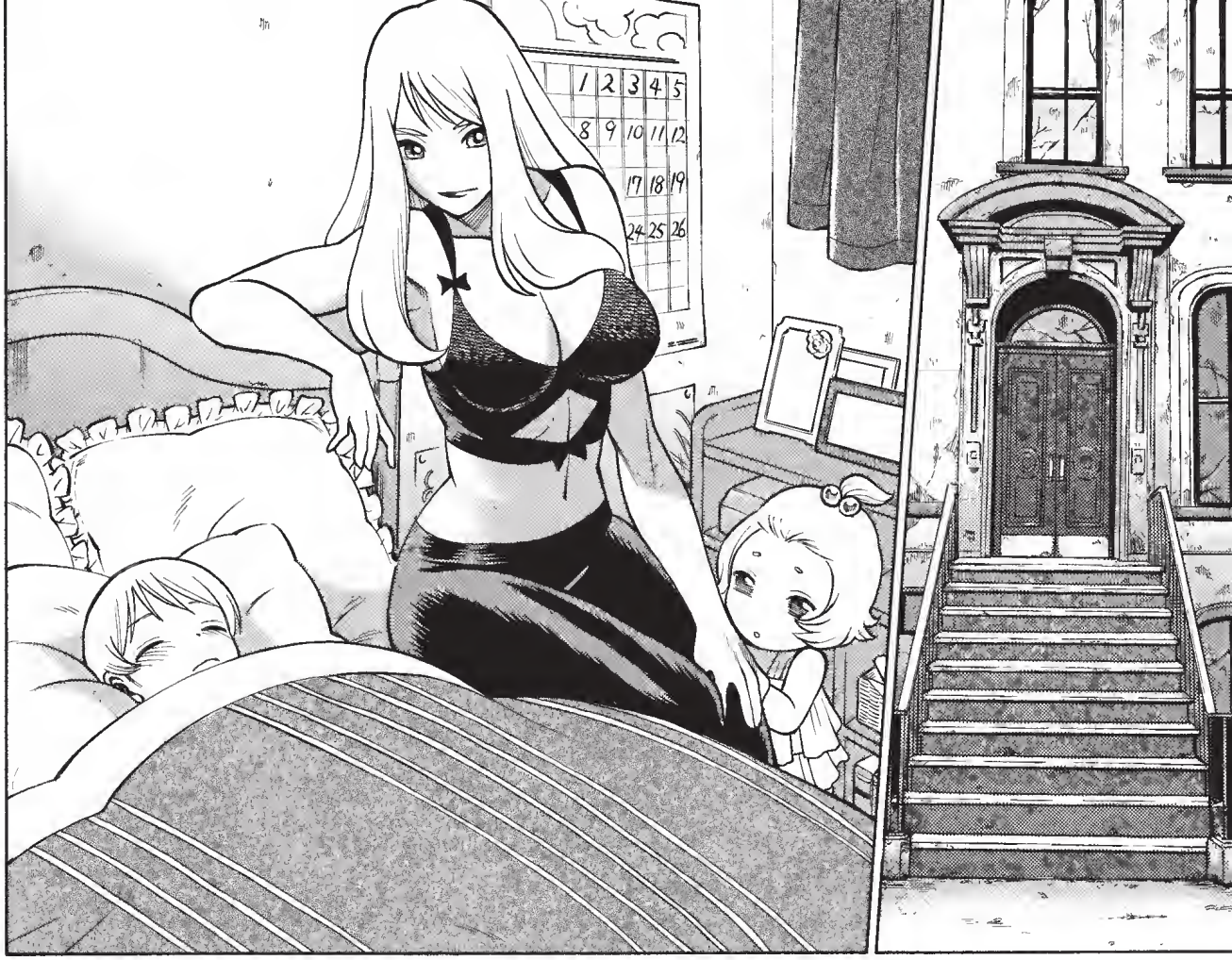
IT WASN'T ANNE FRANK. IT WAS ANNE OF GREEN GABLES...
HOW CARELESS OF ME.
I SKIMMED THE BOOK, OF COURSE. I NEEDED TO IN ORDER TO DEEPEN MY UNDERSTANDING OF YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH MINA.
BUT THE STORY WAS SO SICKENINGLY SWEET AND MIND-NUMBINGLY INSIPID THAT I MUST HAVE UNCONSCIOUSLY PURGED IT FROM MY MIND ALMOST IMMEDIATELY.
TWITCH
HEH HEH... HARD TO BELIEVE, ISN'T IT?
I WENT TO SUCH GREAT LENGTHS TO RE-EXPERIENCE ALL OF THE MOUNTAINS OF DATA WE SCANNED OUT OF MINA'S LITTLE BRAIN...
HER THOUGHT PROCESSES. HER MEMORIES. HER FONDEST HOPES AND DREAMS. I MEMORIZED THEM ALL.
SHYR
SHYR
SHYR
I BELIEVED I HAD BECOME MINA COMPLETELY. SEAMLESSLY. ALL THAT EFFORT... AND WHAT EXPOSES ME?
YOUR VAPID LITTLE FANGIRL HOBBY...
NEVER DID I EXPECT SOMETHING SO TRIVIAL TO POSE ANY KIND OF THREAT TO ME...

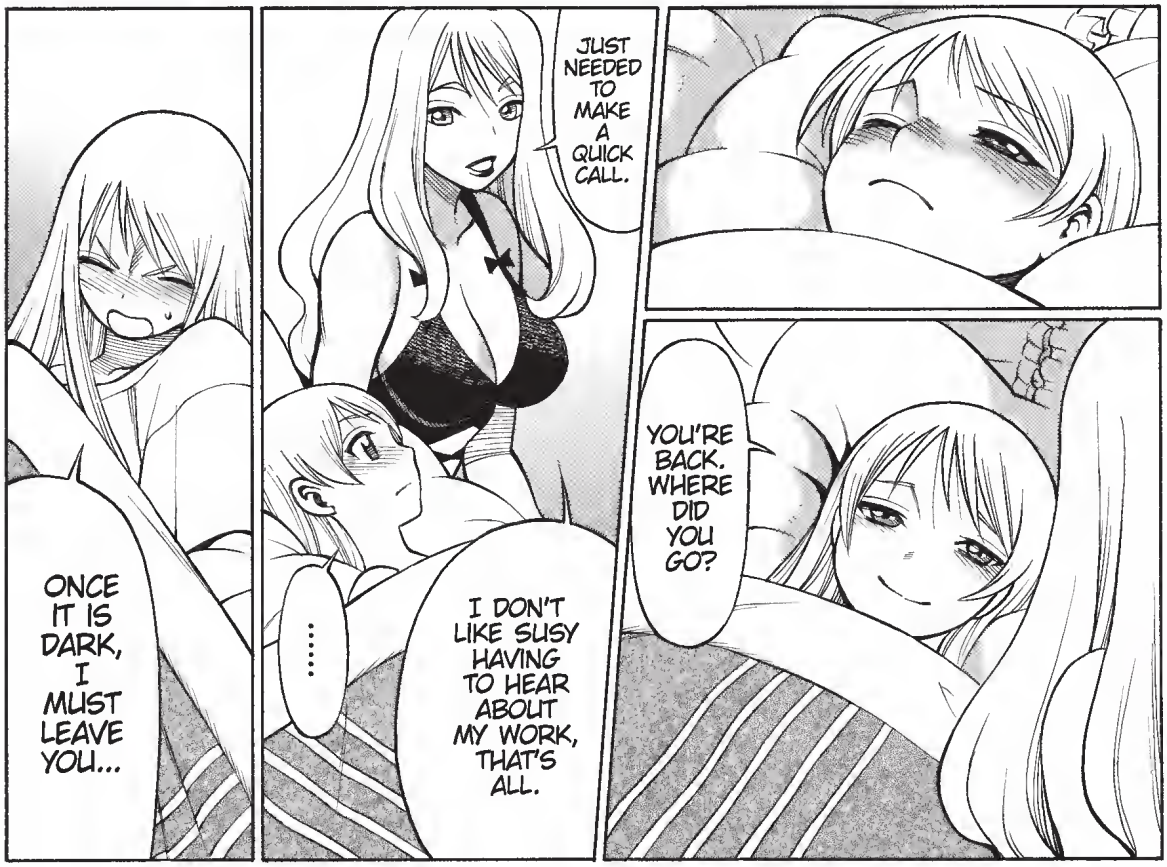
ZZZZ...
Anna
FASH
EMERGENCY CALL
BING
THIS LAPTOP USES THE BUND'S GOVERNMENTAL SERVERS AND INTERNET CONNECTIONS. EVERY SINGLE COMMUNICATION COMING IN TO OR GOING OUT OF THAT SERVER IS MONITORED.
DON'T BOTHER.
WHAM
KRAK

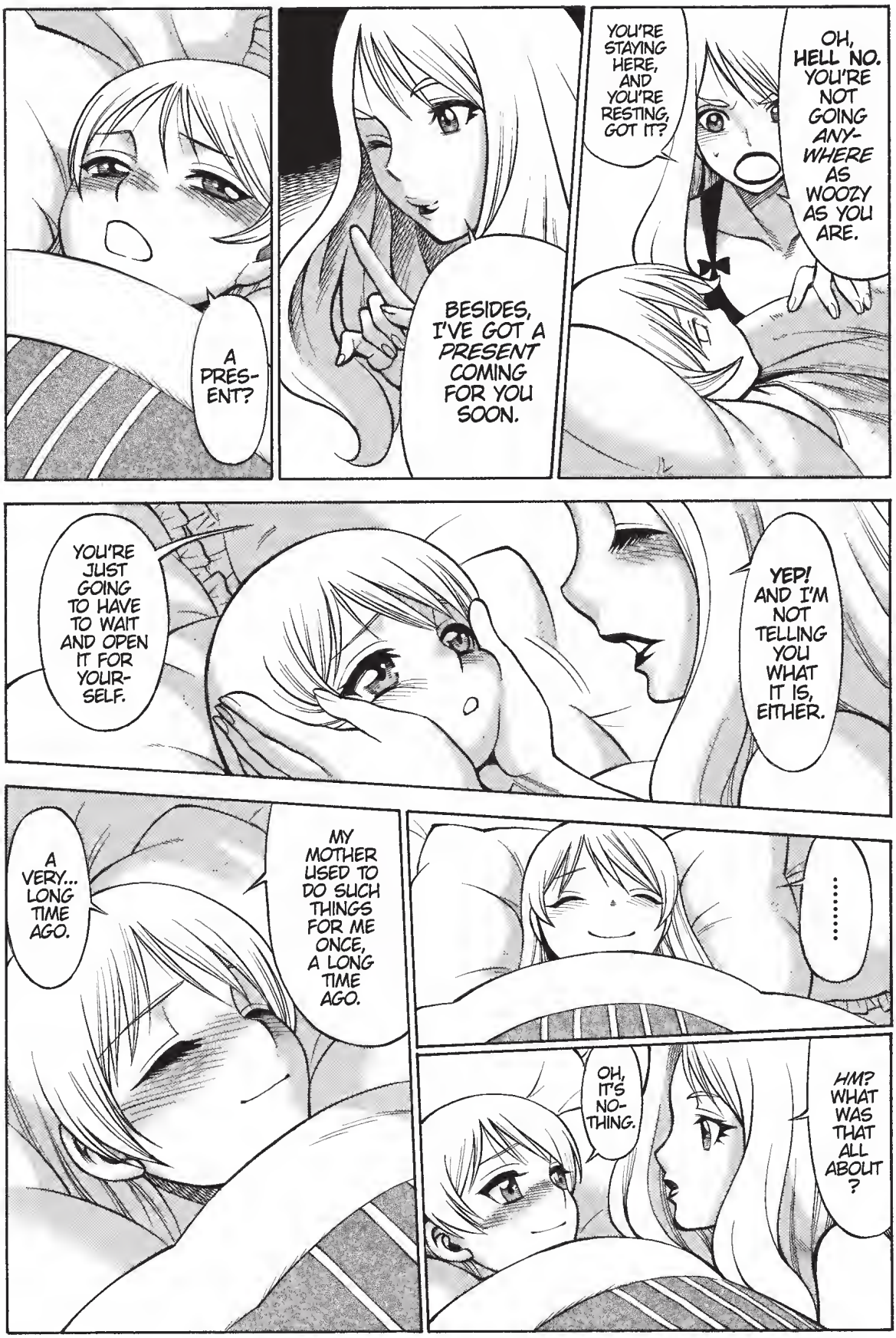
SO I KNOW ALL ABOUT THAT LITTLE SOS YOU TRIED TO SEND TO AKIRA...
YOU THOUGHT YOU GOT OUT, DIDN'T YOU?
YET HERE YOU ARE... STILL RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF IT.
SHE EXPRESSED IT QUITE WELL WHEN SHE TOLD YOU THAT HERE, THERE IS A PLACE THAT WILL DEVOUR THE WEAK, ALL THE WAY DOWN TO THE VERY MARROW OF THEIR BONES.
THAT ONE WOMAN, WHAT WAS HER NAME...? TATIANNA.
YOU MAY BE HUMAN, BUT YOU ARE AT LEAST MODERATELY CLEVER. YOU SHOULD KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS.

NOW...
HOW BEST TO COOK YOU...

Chapter 59: Skyscraper Blues

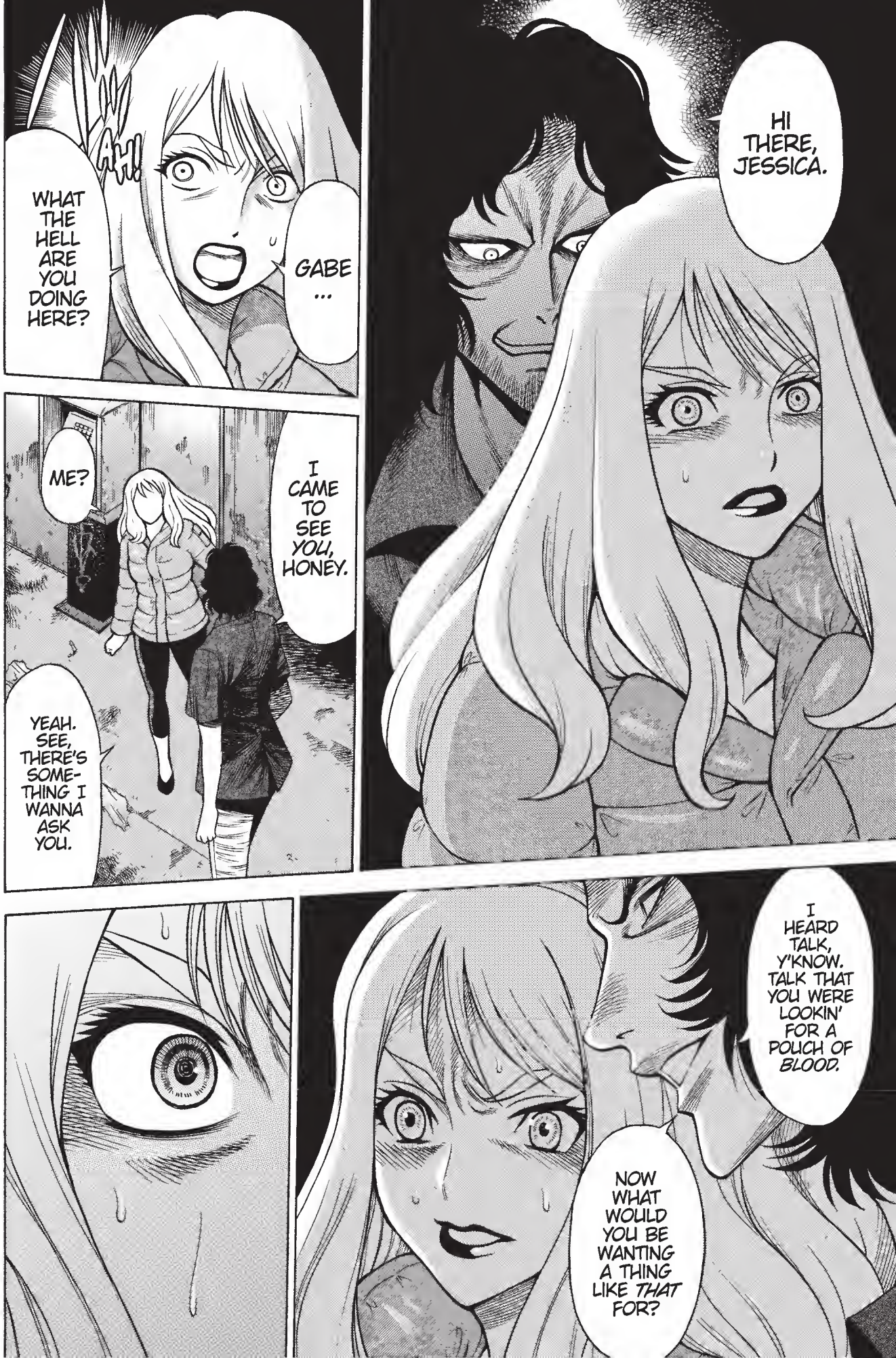


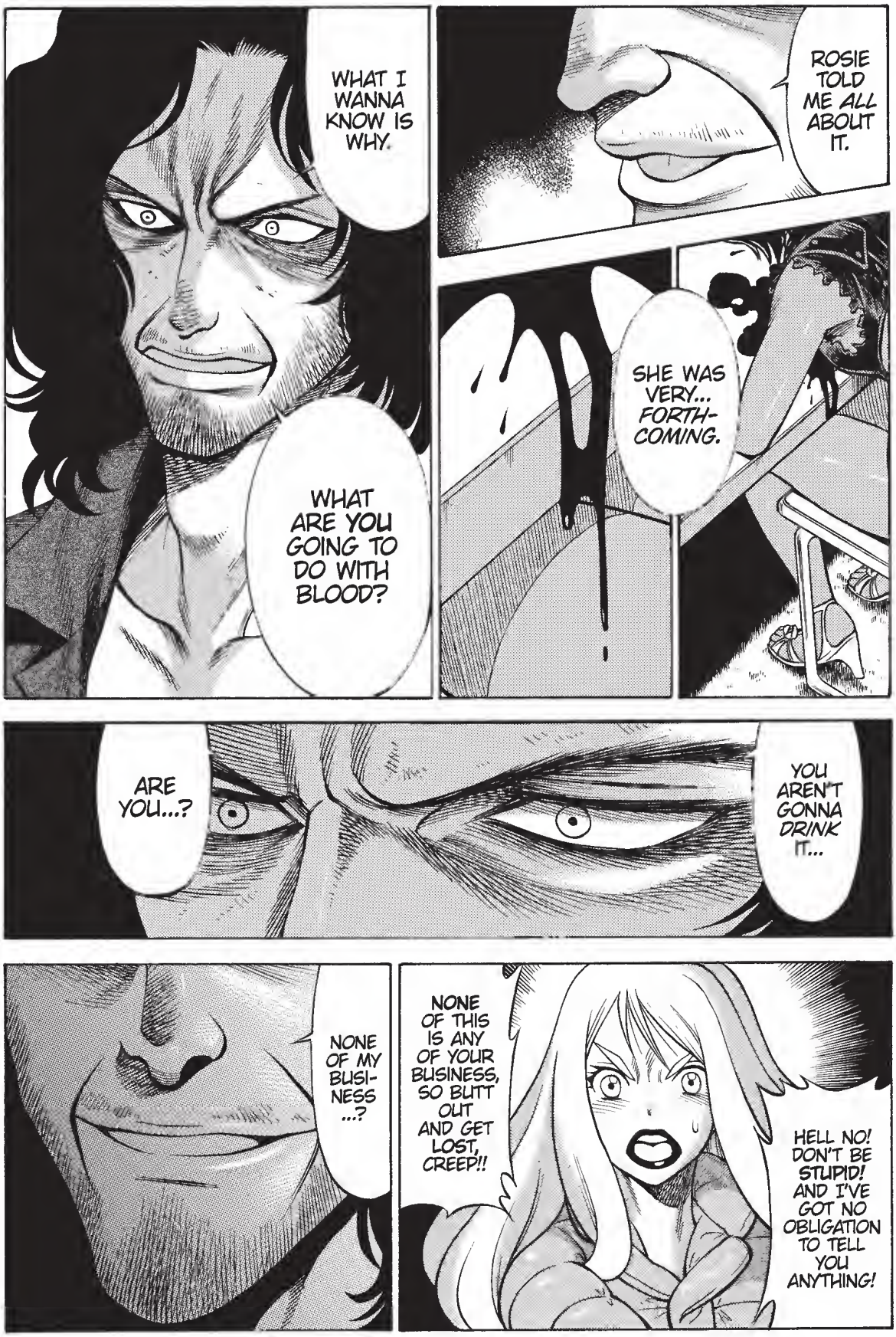

JUST NEEDED TO MAKE A QUICK CALL.
YOU'RE BACK. WHERE DID YOU GO?
I DON'T LIKE SUSY HAVING TO HEAR ABOUT MY WORK, THAT'S ALL.
.....
ONCE IT IS DARK, I MUST LEAVE YOU...


OH, HELL NO. YOU'RE NOT GOING ANY-WHERE AS WOOZY AS YOU ARE.
YOU'RE STAYING HERE, AND YOU'RE RESTING, GOT IT?
BESIDES, I'VE GOT A PRESENT COMING FOR YOU SOON.
A PRES-ENT?
YEP! AND I'M NOT TELLING YOU WHAT IT IS, EITHER.
YOU'RE JUST GOING TO HAVE TO WAIT AND OPEN IT FOR YOUR-SELF.
.....
HM? WHAT WAS THAT ALL ABOUT?
OH, IT'S NO-THING.
MY MOTHER USED TO DO SUCH THINGS FOR ME ONCE, A LONG TIME AGO.
A VERY... LONG TIME AGO.

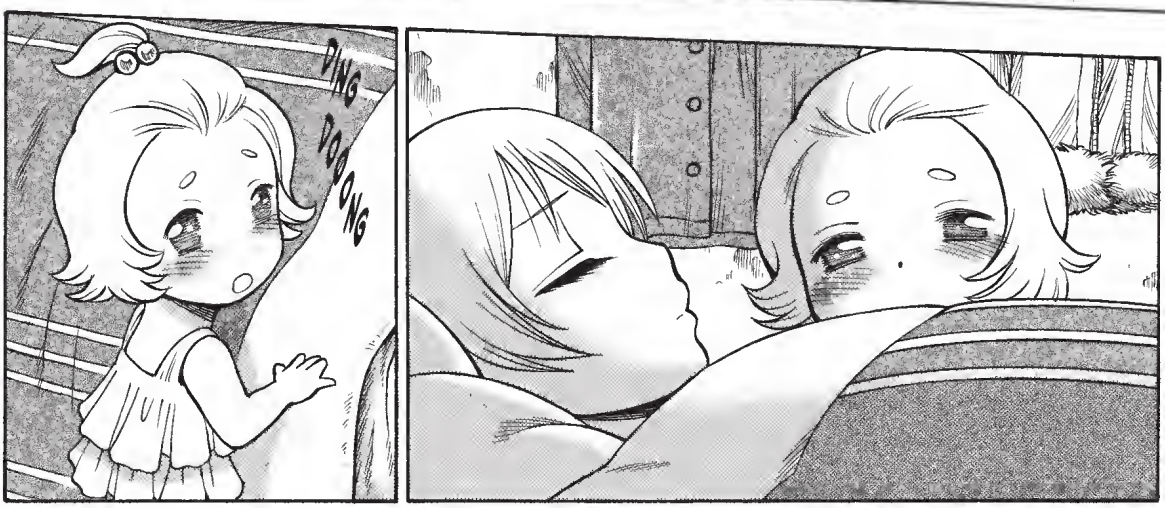
POOR THING. SHE STILL LOOKS SO WORN...
SHE FELL ASLEEP ...
RRR
RRR
BE GOOD AND KEEP AN EYE ON THE PRINCESS, OKAY?! AND IF ANYBODY COMES, WHATEVER YOU DO...
SUSY! MAMA'S GOTTA RUN ANOTHER ERRAND.
HELLO? ROSIE?!
DO YOU HAVE IT?!
I'LL COME AND GET IT RIGHT AWAY. WHERE CAN I FIND YOU?!
WHAT, NOW? SERI-OUSLY?! ROSIE, YOU'RE THE BEST!

DON'T LET THEM IN!
GOOD GIRL! LATCH THE CHAIN WHEN I LEAVE. DON'T WORRY, I WON'T BE LONG!!
Smoke
JAN.


AH!
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING HERE?
GABE ...
HI THERE, JESSICA.
ME?
I CAME TO SEE YOU, HONEY.
YEAH. SEE, THERE'S SOMETHING I WANNA ASK YOU.
I HEARD TALK, Y'KNOW. TALK THAT YOU WERE LOOKIN' FOR A POUCH OF BLOOD.
NOW WHAT WOULD YOU BE WANTING A THING LIKE THAT FOR?


WHAT I WANNA KNOW IS WHY.
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH BLOOD?
ROSIE TOLD ME ALL ABOUT IT.
SHE WAS VERY... FORTH-COMING.
ARE YOU...?
YOU AREN'T GONNA DRINK IT...
NONE OF MY BUSI-NESS ...?
NONE OF THIS IS ANY OF YOUR BUSINESS, SO BUTT OUT AND GET LOST, CREEP!!
HELL NO! DON'T BE STUPID! AND I'VE GOT NO OBLIGATION TO TELL YOU ANYTHING!

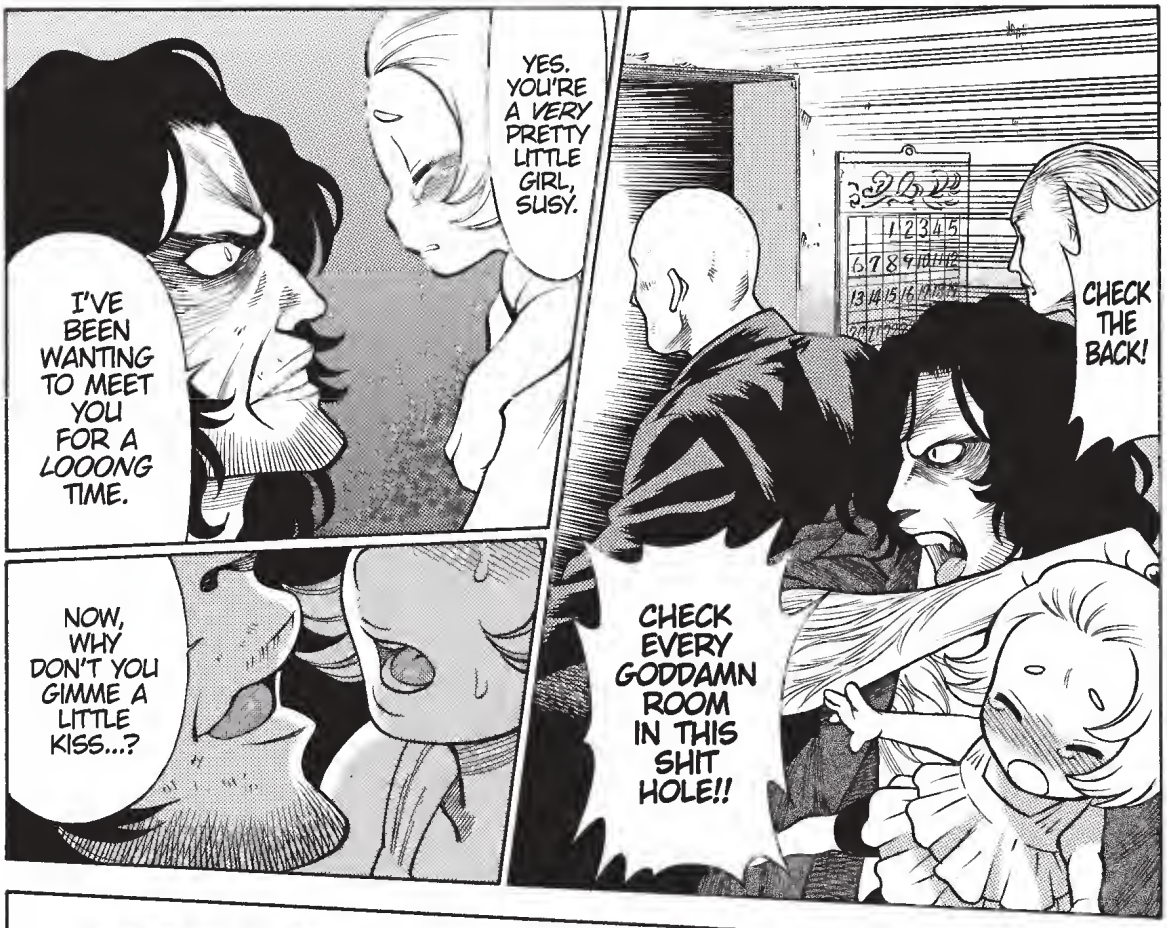
IT IS.
OH, BUT IT IS, JESSICA ...


DING DOONG

MAMA?
MAMA?
IS THAT LITTLE SUSY'S VOICE I HEAR?
YES. YES, I THINK IT IS. HI, SUUUSY!
WHO ARE YOU, MISTER?
I'M ONE OF YOUR MAMA'S FRIENDS.
WOULD YOU OPEN THE DOOR AND LET ME IN, PRETTY PLEASE?
MAMA TOLD ME NEVER TO LET STRANGERS COME IN.
BAM
TWITCH

BUT Y'SEE, I'M *NOT* A STRANGER. YOUR MAMA ASKED ME TO COME AND GET YOU.
WELL, AREN'T *YOU* A GOOD LITTLE GIRL, **SUUUSY.** GOOD CHILDREN ALWAYS LISTEN TO WHAT THEIR MAMAS SAY.
BUT...
SHE SAID NEVER OPEN THE DOOR...
SKRAK
WHAM
YES. YOU ARE A *VERY* GOOD GIRL. I THINK I LIKE YOU...

HI THERE, SUSY.
YOU'RE EVEN PRETTIER THAN I THOUGHT.
WHAM!!!


YES. YOU'RE A VERY PRETTY LITTLE GIRL, SUSY.
I'VE BEEN WANTING TO MEET YOU FOR A LOOONG TIME.
NOW, WHY DON'T YOU GIMME A LITTLE KISS...?
CHECK THE BACK!
CHECK EVERY GODDAMN ROOM IN THIS SHIT HOLE!!

GHUH ...
AAH ...

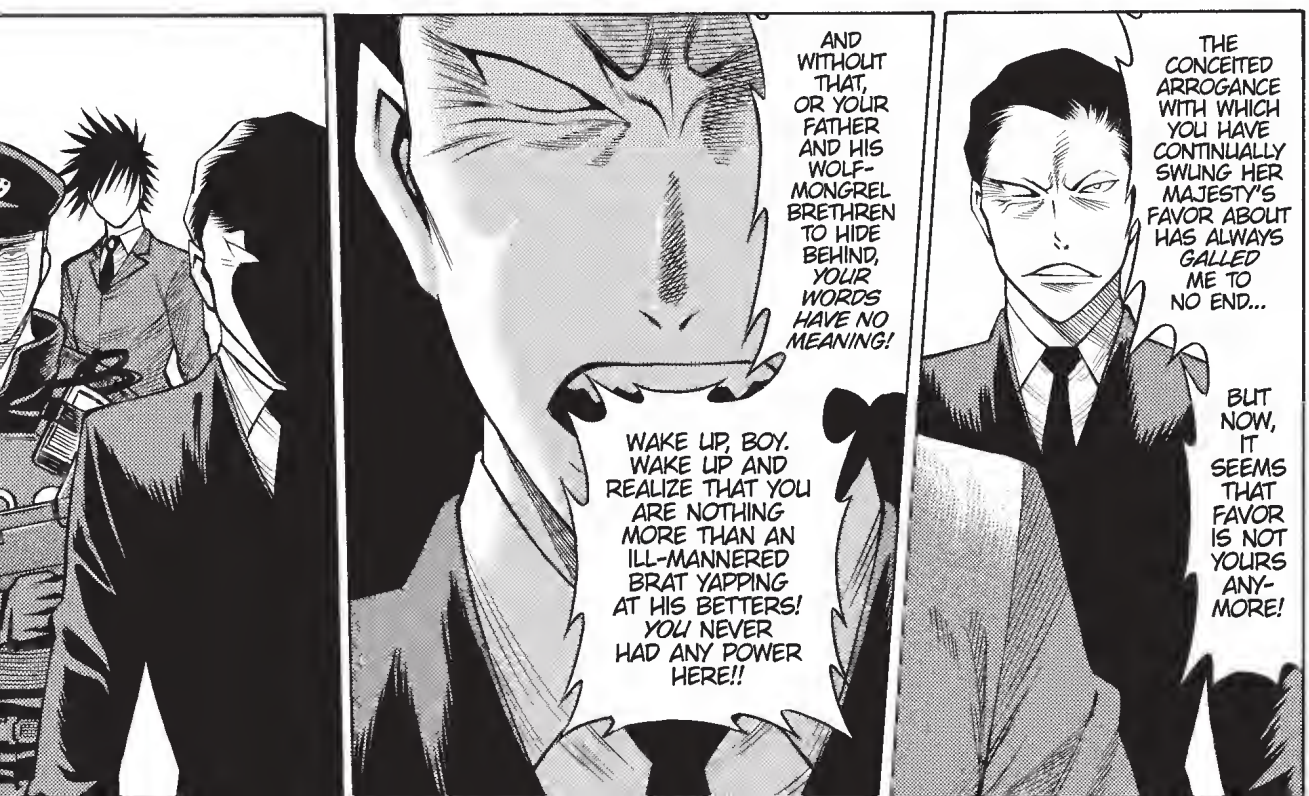
HOLY SHIT... SHE'S REALLY HERE...
TAKE YOUR FILTHY HANDS OFF THAT CHILD THIS INSTANT...
PRINCESS MINA HERSELF IS *REALLY HERE.* IN THIS RAT HOLE OF AN APARTMENT!
PSHOOM
I SAID...

TAKE YOUR HANDS OFF OF HER!!

DAMN!
COME BACK HERE ...
NNPH ...
A SATELLITE PHONE...
THIS... COULD WORK.
I MAY BE ABLE TO GET THROUGH TO THE BUND...

WHAT THE HELL ?!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN YUKI'S UNDER ARREST ?!
NEW EVIDENCE IN CONNECTION WITH THE INCIDENT OF HER MAJESTY'S POISONING BY NANOMACHINES HAS ARISEN. THIS EVIDENCE SUGGESTS THE HUMAN GIRL MAY HAVE BEEN MORE INVOLVED THAN PREVIOUSLY BELIEVED.
UNTIL THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER CAN BE DETERMINED, THE INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION WILL RETAIN THE GIRL AS A PERSON OF INTEREST.
YOU'VE GOTTA BE KID-DING ME!
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TRYING TO PULL HERE?! THAT CASE WAS CLOSED AND BURIED AGES AGO. HIME-SAN HERSELF STOOD WITNESS TO YUKI'S INNOCENCE!
AND IT WAS HER MAJESTY HERSELF WHO DECLARED THE NEED FOR THE CASE TO BE REOPENED AND RE-EXAMINED.
WHAT ...?!

HER MAJESTY HAS REQUESTED SHE BE UNDISTURBED UNTIL...
I WASN'T ASKING YOU!!
TO ASK HIME-SAN WHAT SHE REALLY SAID!
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
WSH
KCHAK
KCHAK
!

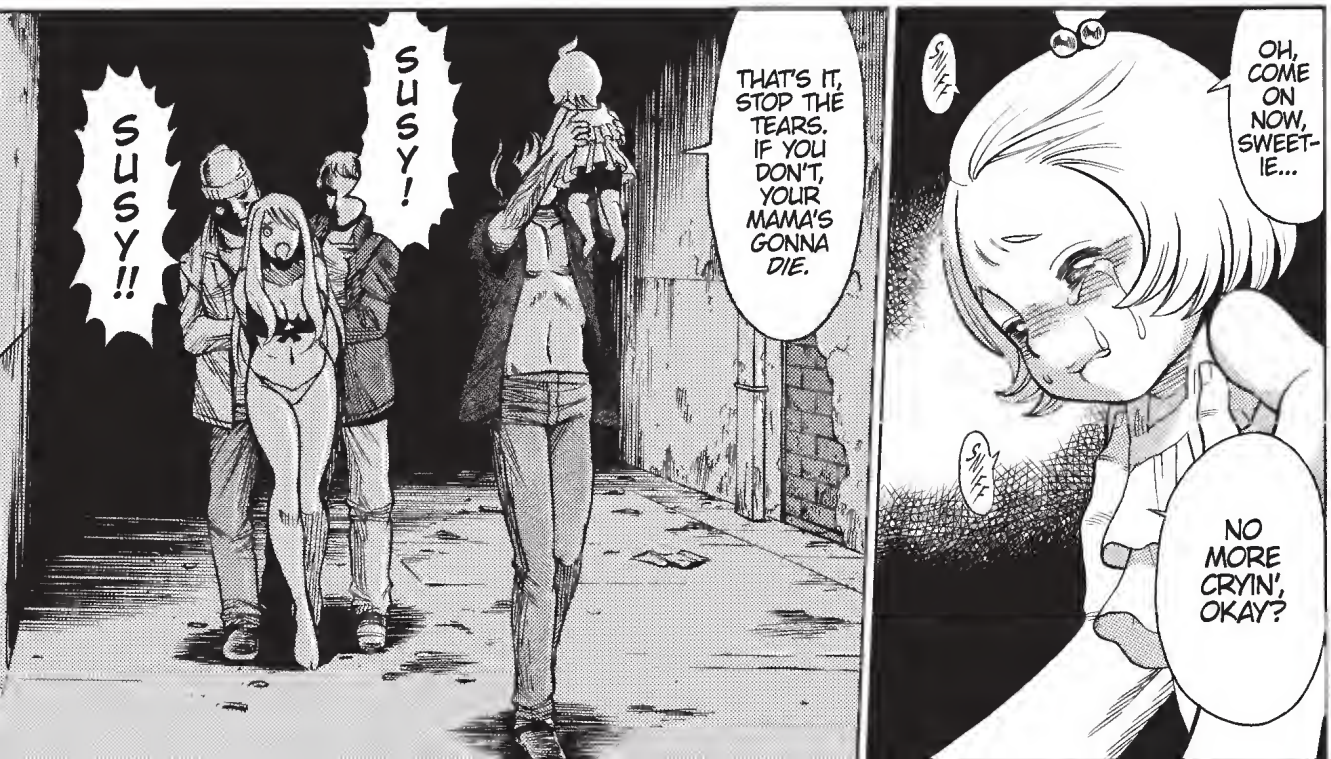

THE CONCEITED ARROGANCE WITH WHICH YOU HAVE CONTINUALLY SWUNG HER MAJESTY'S FAVOR ABOUT HAS ALWAYS GALLED ME TO NO END...
BUT NOW, IT SEEMS THAT FAVOR IS NOT YOURS ANY-MORE!
AND WITHOUT THAT, OR YOUR FATHER AND HIS WOLF-MONGREL BRETHREN TO HIDE BEHIND, YOUR WORDS HAVE NO MEANING!
WAKE UP, BOY. WAKE UP AND REALIZE THAT YOU ARE NOTHING MORE THAN AN ILL-MANNERED BRAT YAPPING AT HIS BETTERS! YOU NEVER HAD ANY POWER HERE!!

WHO WOULD BE CALL-ING ME...?
0011 81 212
.....
AN INTER-NA-TIONAL CALL?
R2222
R2222
.....
ANSWER.
PLEASE ...
ANSWER ME, AKIRA.

KLIK
HELLO ?
.....
THIS IS KABURAGI AKIRA'S CELL PHONE.
A...
HELLO ...?
HELLOOO? IS ANYBODY THERE?
A...
A...

AKIRAAAA!!
!
HIME-SAN?
HIME-SAN, ARE YOU THERE?!
WHAT'S WRONG?! WHERE ARE YOU CALLING FROM?!
BEEEEEEP
BEEEEEEP
Call Lost

DAMMIT! JAMMED...
iridium
Satellite Link Lost
KRAK


SUSY!
SUSY!!
THAT'S IT, STOP THE TEARS. IF YOU DON'T, YOUR MAMA'S GONNA DIE.
SNIFF
OH, COME ON NOW, SWEET-IE...
SNIFF
NO MORE CRYIN', OKAY?

LET HER GO, YOU BAS-TARD!
IF YOU DO ANY-THING TO HER, I'LL KILL YOU!!
I SWEAR TO GOD... I'LL KILL YOU!!
SMACK
NGK!
KOFF...
AH HA HA HA HA!!
MAMAAA!!!

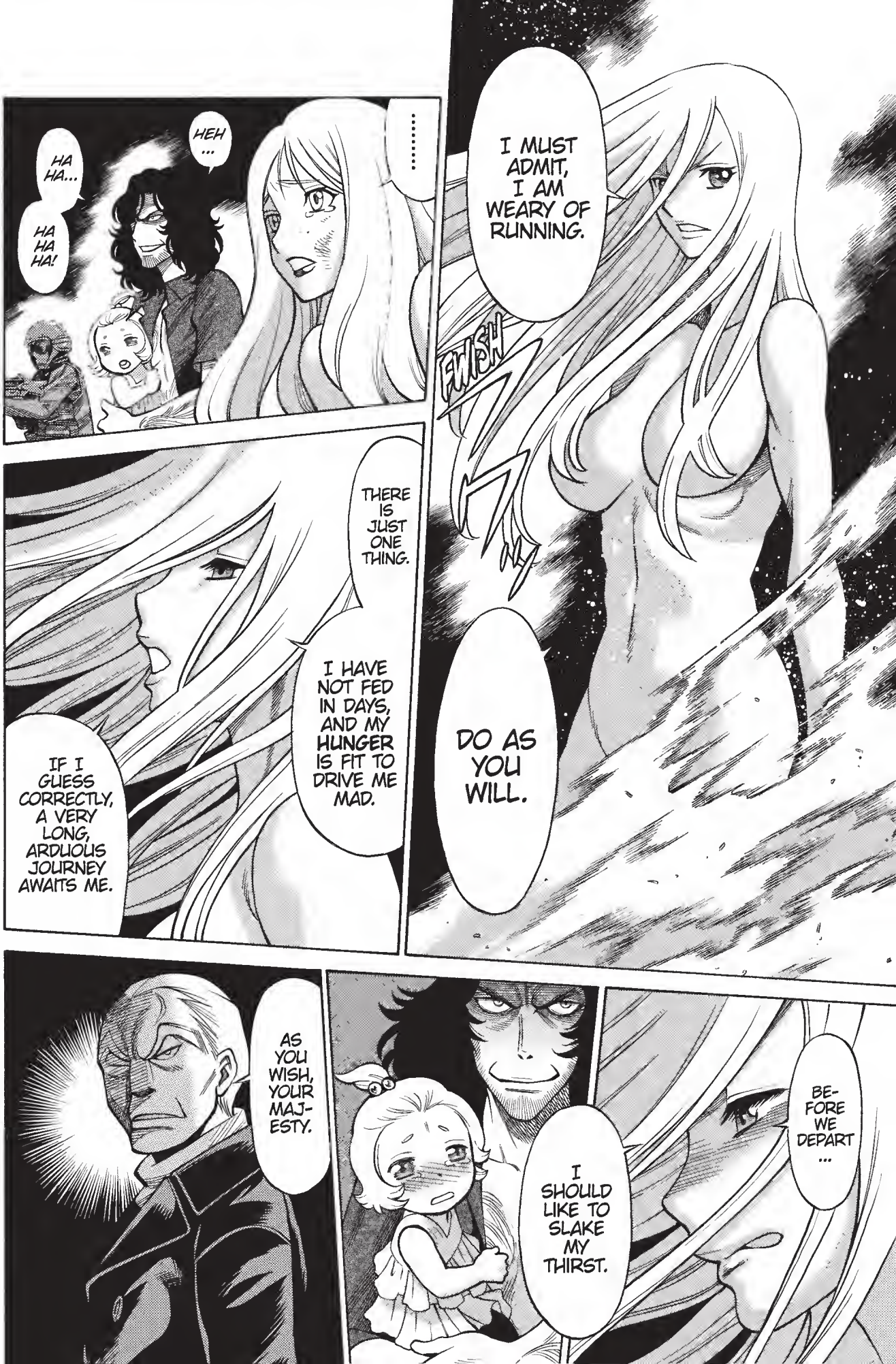
THE HELL ...?
FWISH

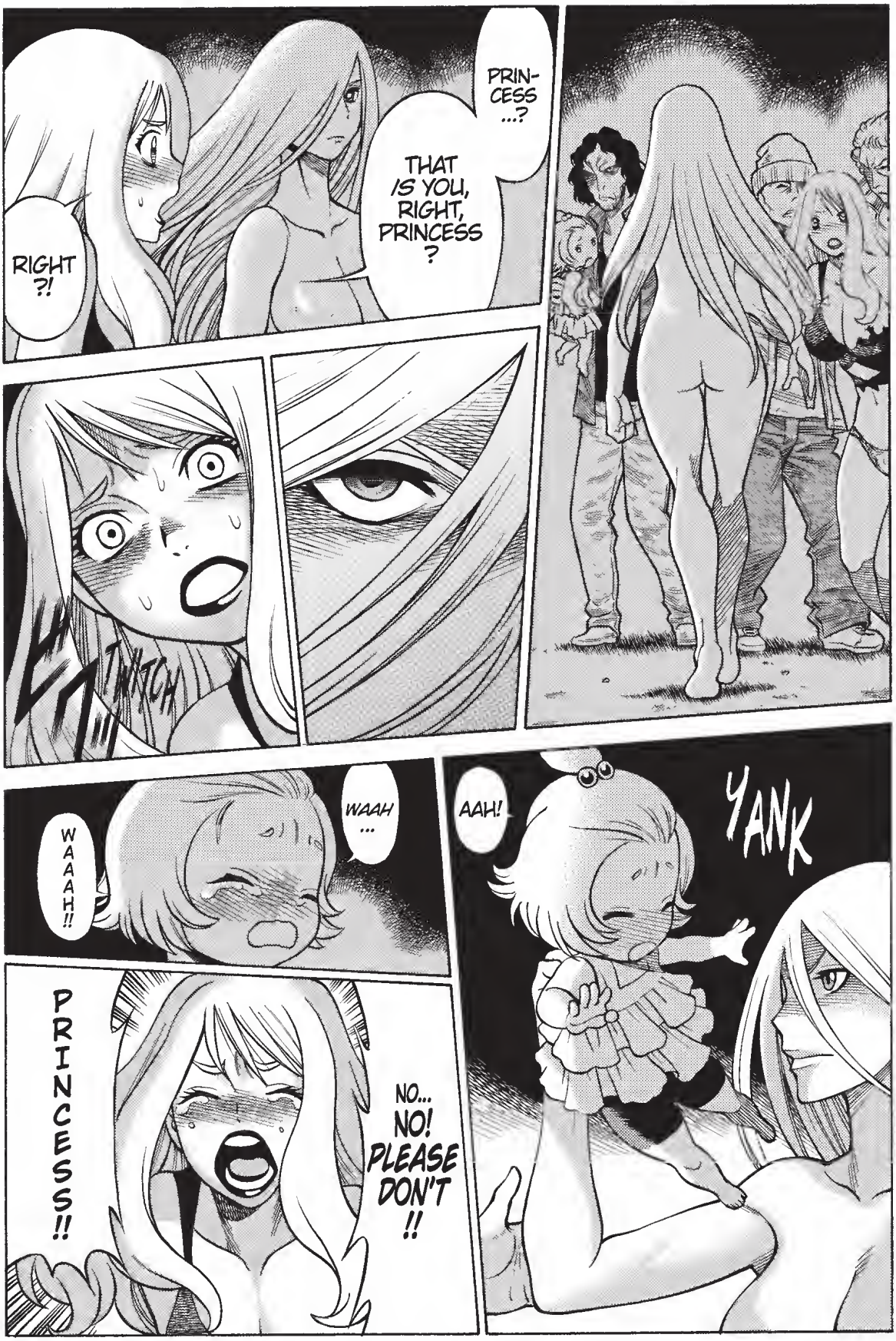
DID YOU NOT HEAR ME BEFORE ...
WHO THE HELL ARE YOU ?!
I SAID LET HER GO!!
AHH!!
SWIP
WAP

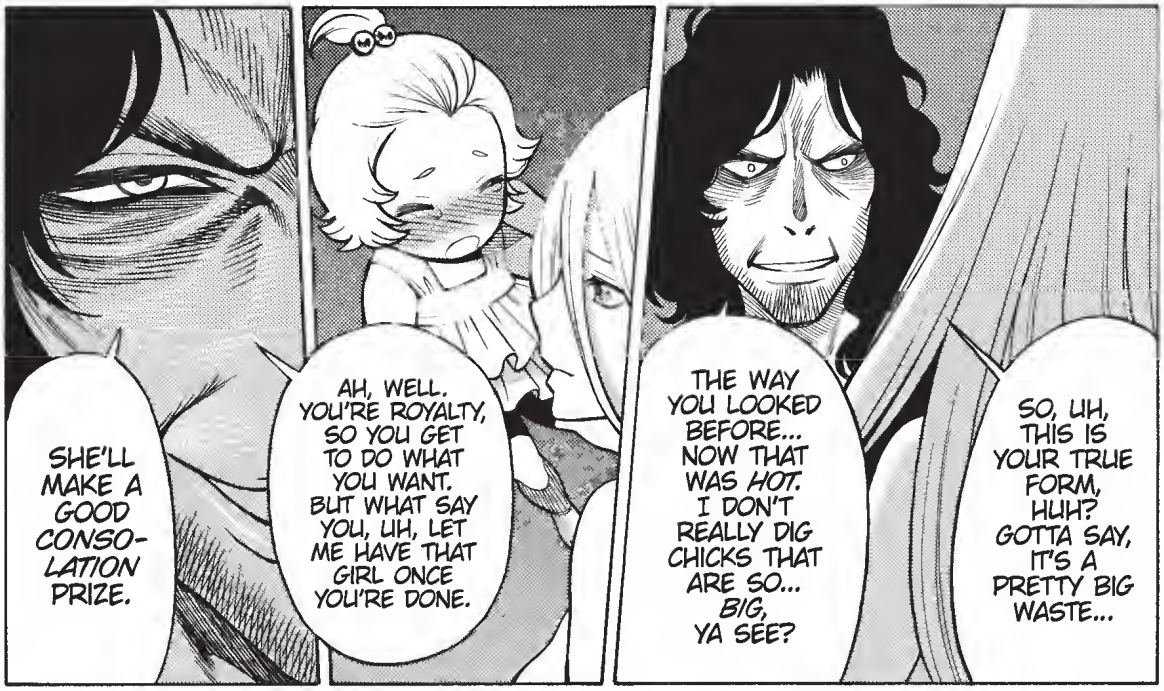
YU...
YUZURU?!
YOUR MAJ-ESTY.
WSH

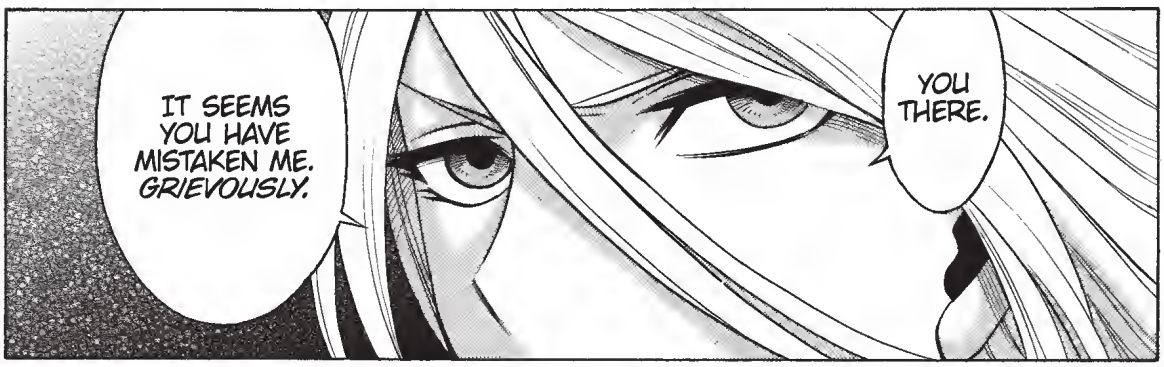
MY NAME IS GERHARD FREEMAN. I HAVE THE HONOR OF SERVING AS GUARD AND RETAINER TO MY LORD, DUKE ROZENMANN.
I HAVE COME AT HIS ORDERS, TO ESCORT YOUR MAJESTY BACK TO HIS DOMAIN.
SO, YOU ARE ONE OF HIS WERE-WOLVES, HM?
THE HONOR OF THE EARTH CLAN WEEPS AT THE TACTICS YOU USE HERE TODAY.
YOUR WORDS ARE TRUTH, YOUR MAJESTY. IT PAINS ME TO HEAR THEM...
HOWEVER, YOUR POWER IS GREAT, YOUR MAJESTY, AND WE FEAR IT MUCH.
THUS, IT WAS DEEMED THAT THIS STRATEGY, COWARDLY THOUGH IT MAY SEEM...
WAS IN FACT THE MOST PRUDENT PATH TO TAKE IN ORDER TO RESOLVE THIS ISSUE...
WITH THE MINIMUM OF BLOODSHED, COLLATERAL DAMAGE, AND MOST OF ALL, UNNECESSARY INJURY TO YOUR ROYAL PERSON.

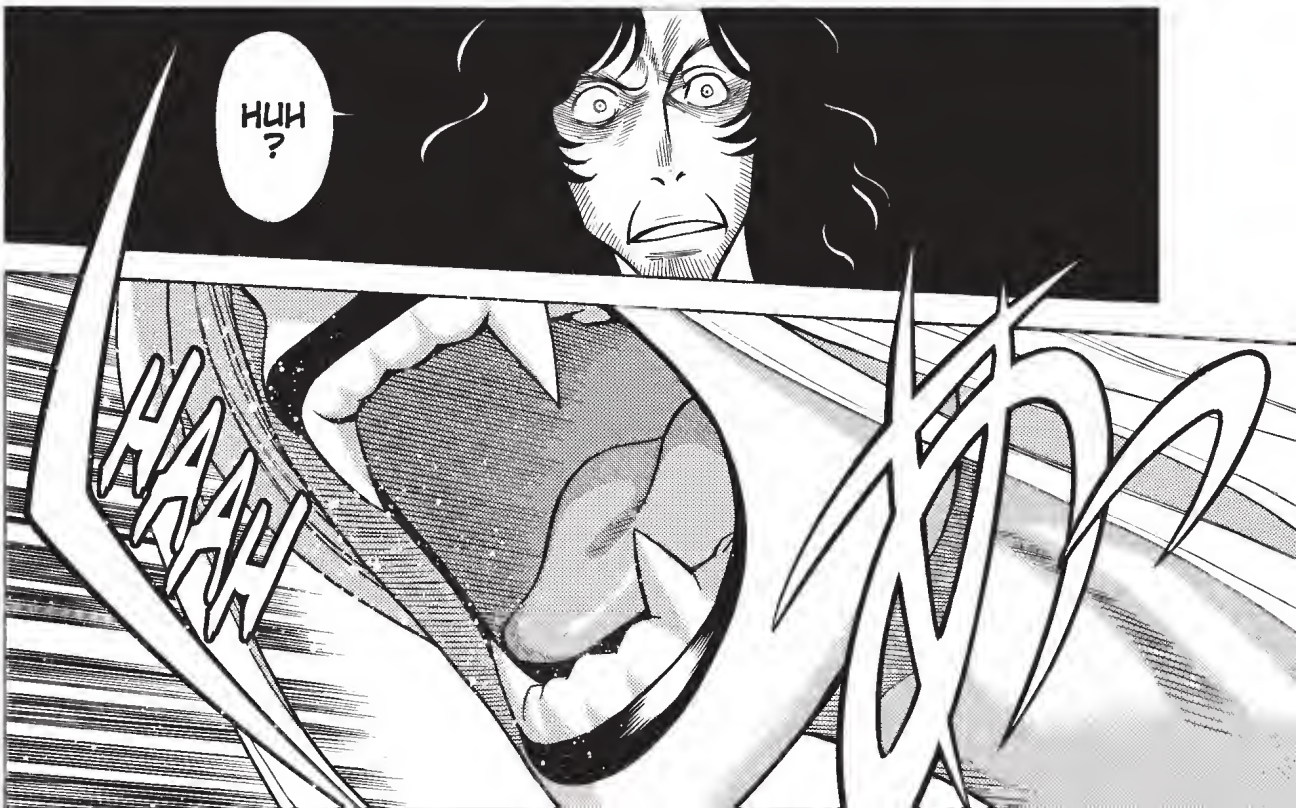
I SEE. SO YOU ARE SAYING THAT IF I VOLUNTARILY ACCOMPANY YOU...
THAT THE HUMAN WOMAN AND HER CHILD WILL GO FREE?
IF YOU WISH IT, SO SHALL IT BE.


I MUST ADMIT, I AM WEARY OF RUNNING.
FWISH
DO AS YOU WILL.
THERE IS JUST ONE THING.
I HAVE NOT FED IN DAYS, AND MY HUNGER IS FIT TO DRIVE ME MAD.
IF I GUESS CORRECTLY, A VERY LONG, ARDUOUS JOURNEY AWAITS ME.
HEH ...
HA HA...
HA HA HA!
BE-FORE WE DEPART ...
I SHOULD LIKE TO SLAKE MY THIRST.
AS YOU WISH, YOUR MAJ-ESTY.


PRIN-
CESS
...?
THAT
IS YOU,
RIGHT,
PRINCESS
?
RIGHT
?!
TWITCH
!!!
YANK
AAH!
WAAH
...
WAAAH
!!
NO...
NO!
PLEASE
DON'T
!!
PRINCESS
!!

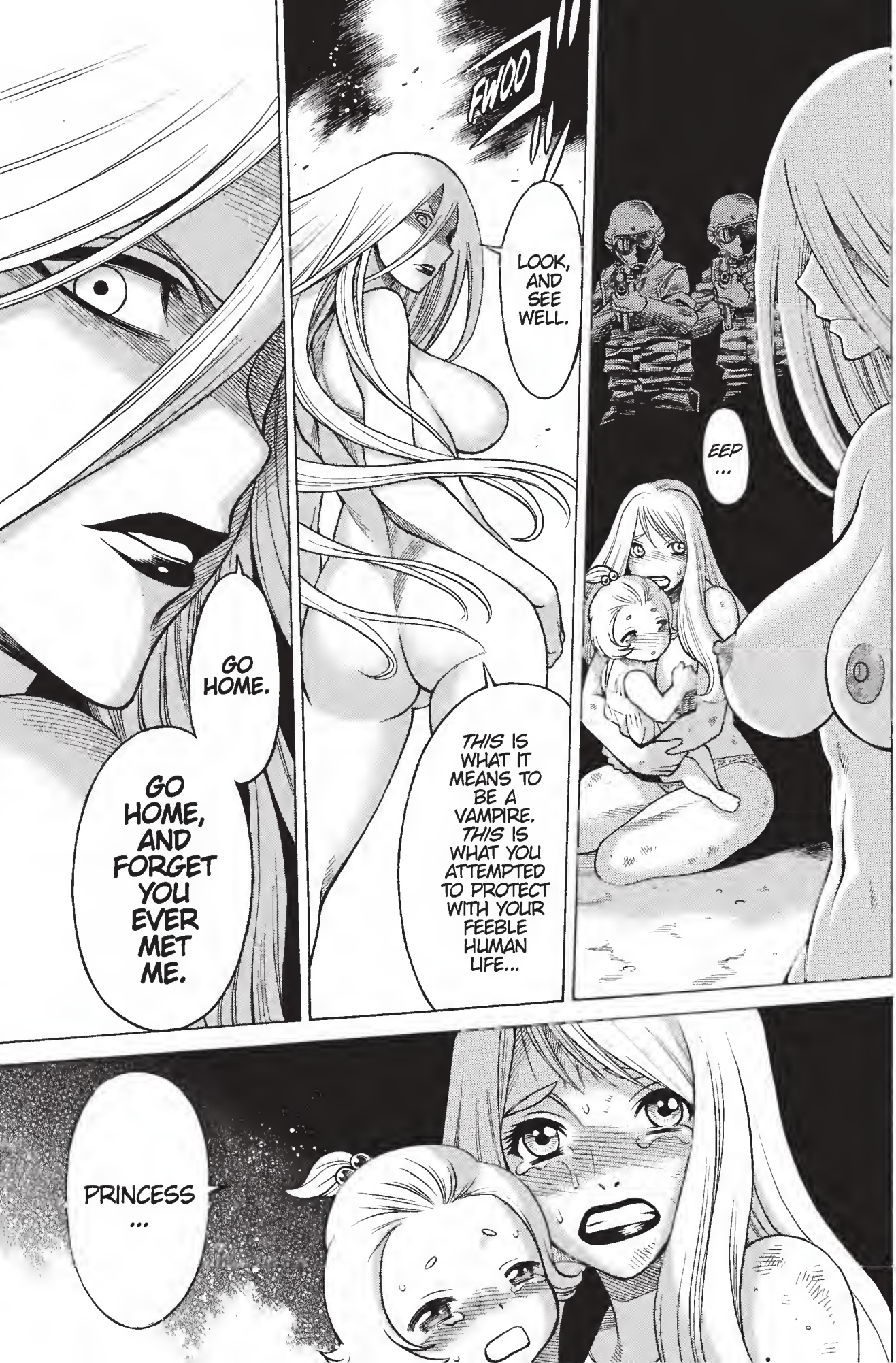

SO, UH, THIS IS YOUR TRUE FORM, HUH? GOTTA SAY, IT'S A PRETTY BIG WASTE...
THE WAY YOU LOOKED BEFORE... NOW THAT WAS *HOT*. I DON'T REALLY DIG CHICKS THAT ARE SO... *BIG*, YA SEE?
AH, WELL. YOU'RE ROYALTY, SO YOU GET TO DO WHAT YOU WANT. BUT WHAT SAY YOU, UH, LET ME HAVE THAT GIRL ONCE YOU'RE DONE.
SHE'LL MAKE A GOOD *CONSO-LATION* PRIZE.


YOU THERE.
IT SEEMS YOU HAVE MISTAKEN ME. *GRIEVOUSLY.*

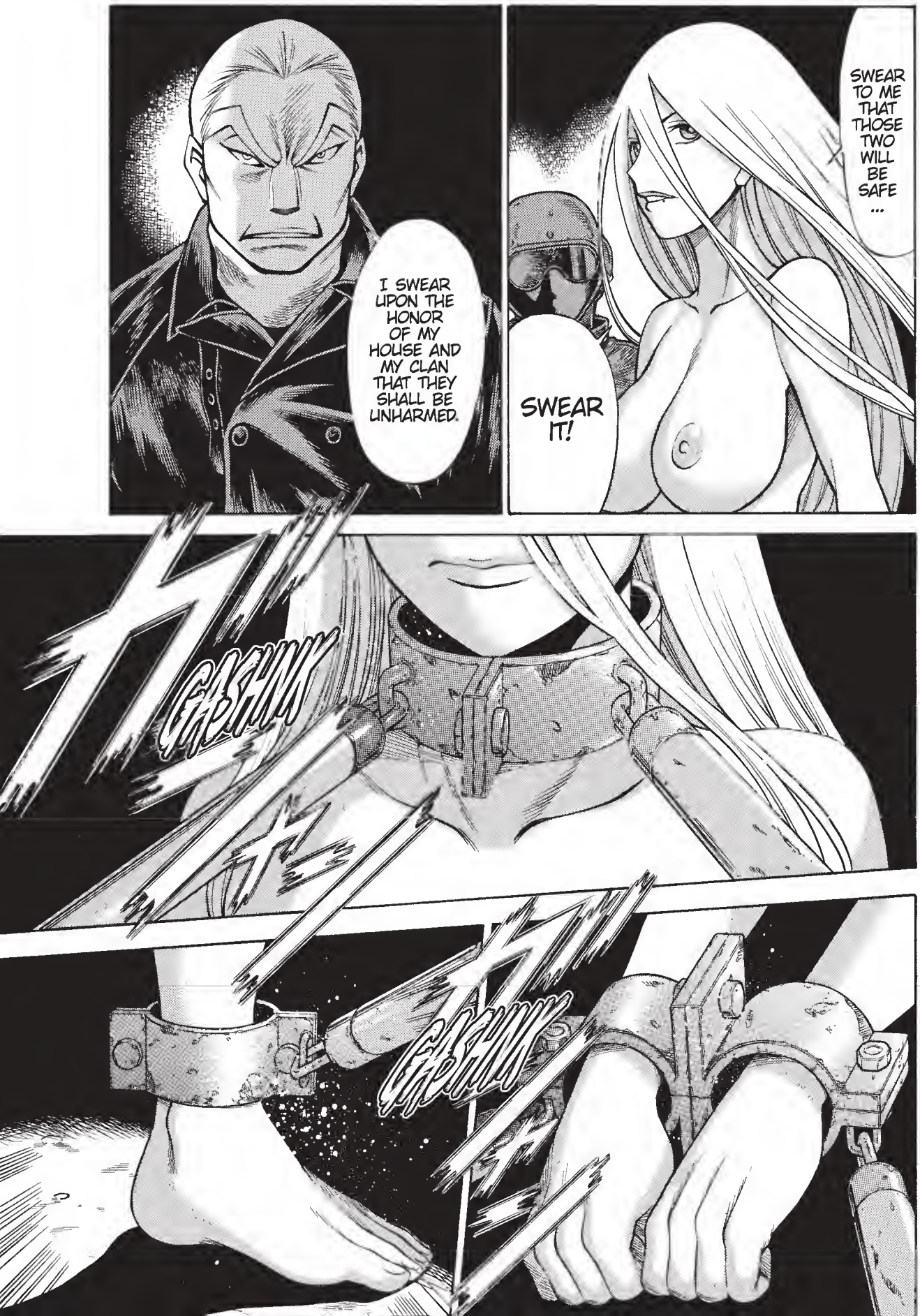

HUH?
HAAH

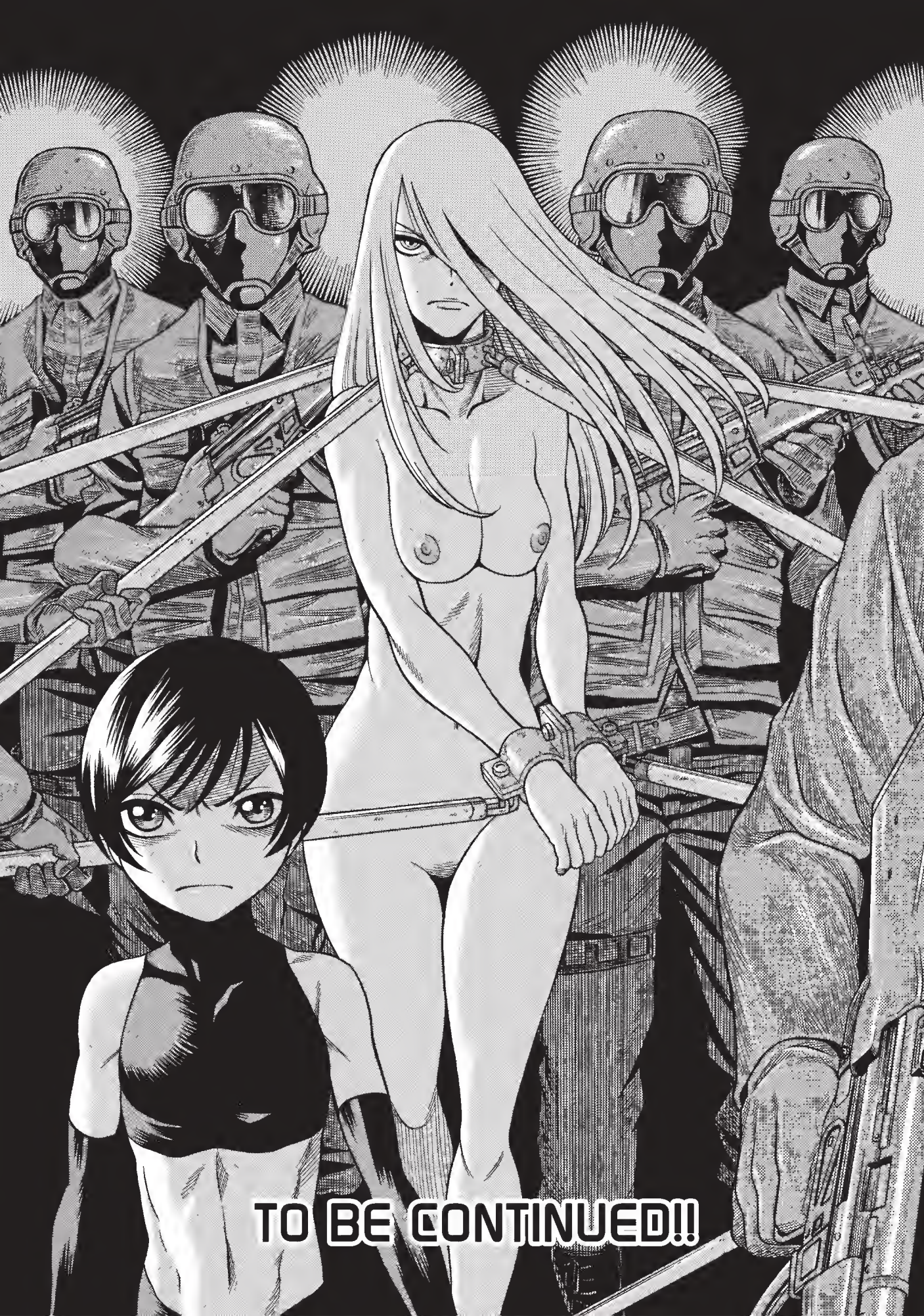
RRIIIP
GEK!
GURGH!
GAH ...
SLUCH
HFF ...
IT WILL BE DAYS BEFORE MY MOUTH IS RID OF THE FOUL TASTE.
FEH! DISGUSTING. YOUR BLOOD IS AS ROTTEN AS YOUR SOUL.
PTOO

KYAAAAAAAA!!!
SHRIP
SHHHH
KA

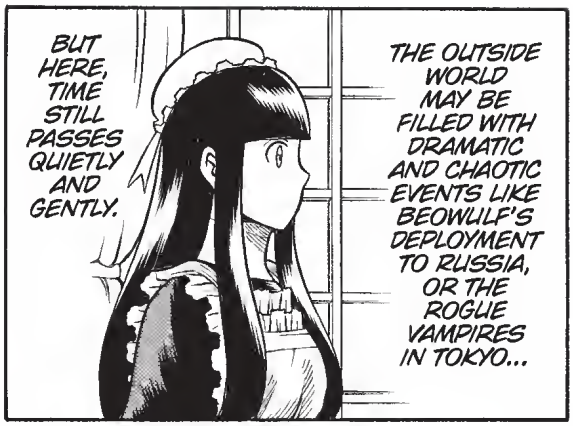

FWOO
LOOK, AND SEE WELL.
EEP ...
THIS IS WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A VAMPIRE. THIS IS WHAT YOU ATTEMPTED TO PROTECT WITH YOUR FEEBLE HUMAN LIFE...
GO HOME.
GO HOME, AND FORGET YOU EVER MET ME.
PRINCESS ...

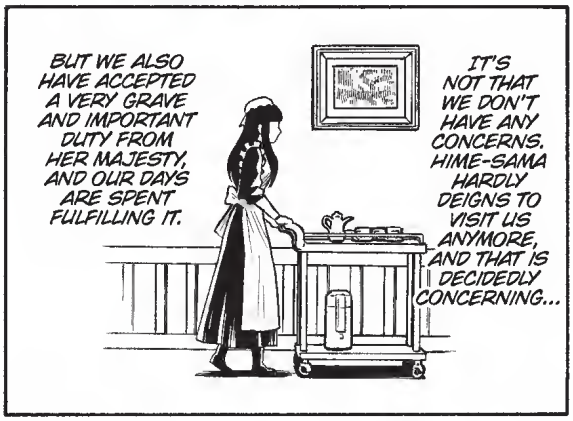
BE WELL ...
AND TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOUR CHILD.
PRINCESS!

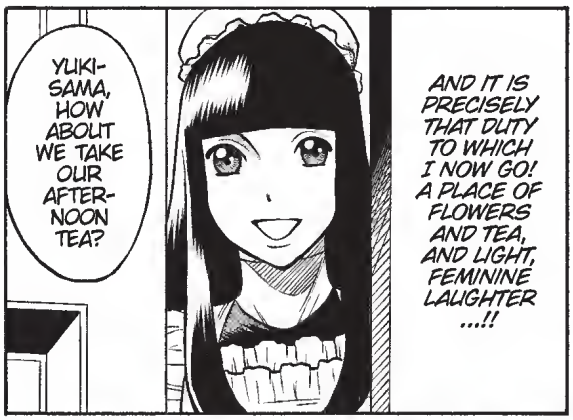

I SWEAR UPON THE HONOR OF MY HOUSE AND MY CLAN THAT THEY SHALL BE UNHARMED.
SWEAR TO ME THAT THOSE TWO WILL BE SAFE ...
SWEAR IT!
GASHNK
GASHNK

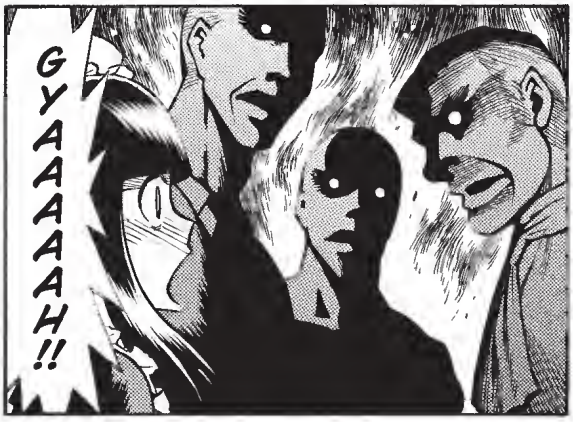

TO BE CONTINUED!!

Dance In The Vampire Bund



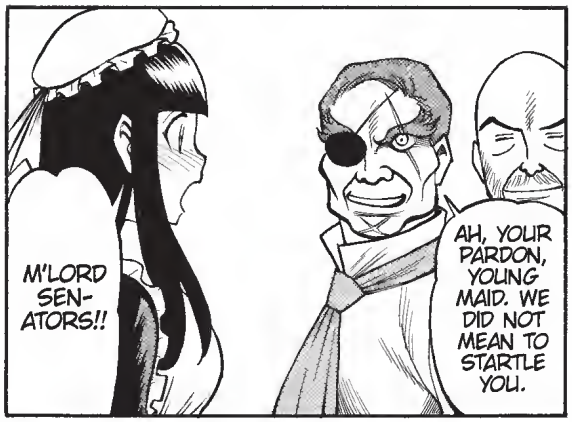


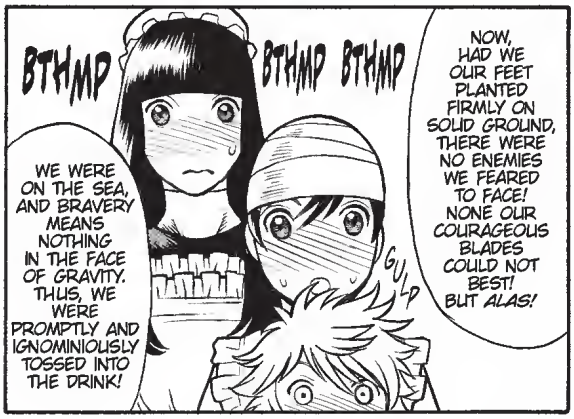


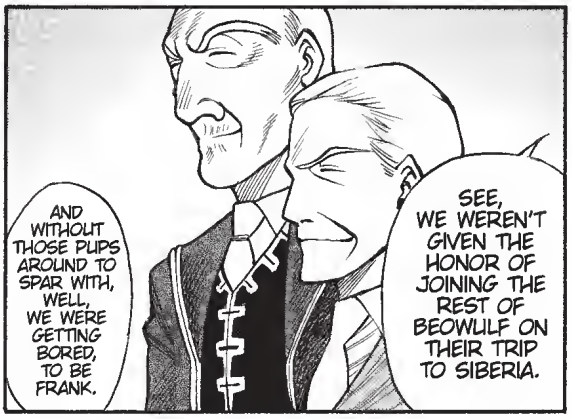


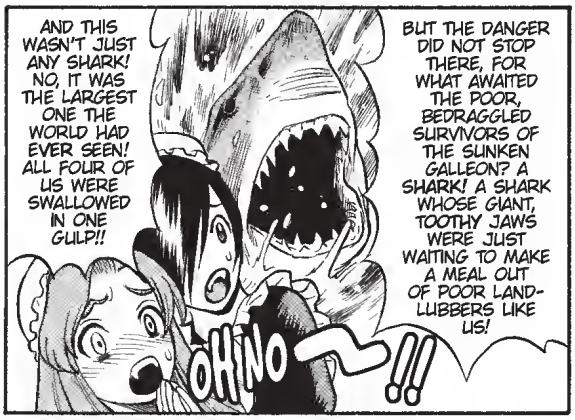
DANCE with the VAMPIRE MAID

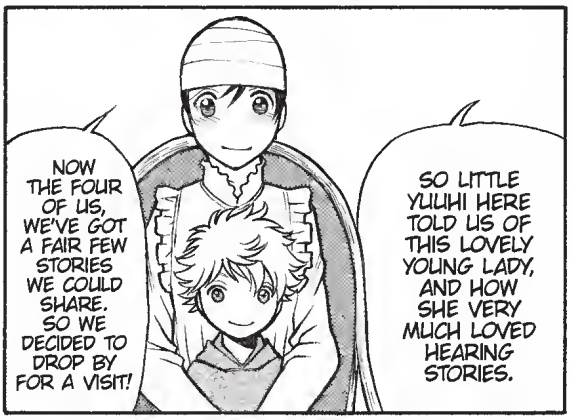
AND SO THE CANNON BARRAGE FROM THE BRITISH FRIGATE RIPPED RIGHT INTO OUR GALLEON, FULL BROADSIDE!
THEY MUST HAVE THOUGHT WE WERE REMNANTS OF THE SPANISH ARMADA, SEE, AND SO GAVE US NO CHANCE FOR PARLAY!

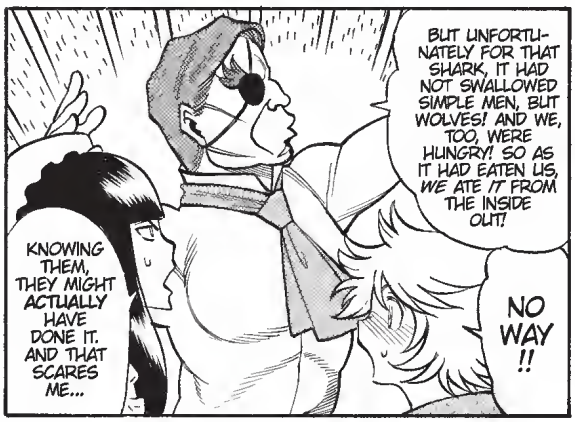

M'LORD SEN-ATORS!!
AH, YOUR PARDON, YOUNG MAID. WE DID NOT MEAN TO STARTLE YOU.

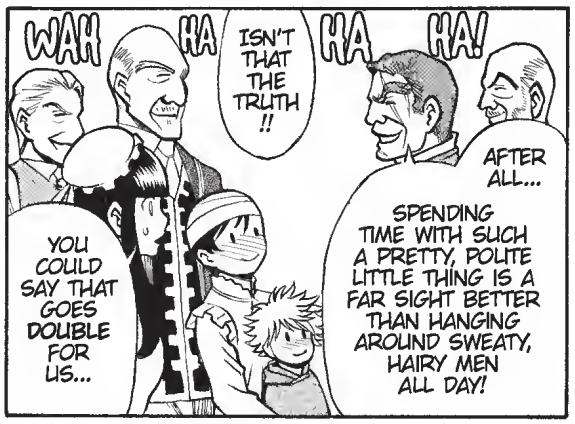

BTHMP
BTHMP BTHMP
NOW, HAD WE OUR FEET PLANTED FIRMLY ON SOLID GROUND, THERE WERE NO ENEMIES WE FEARED TO FACE! NONE OUR COURAGEOUS BLADES COULD NOT BEST! BUT ALAS!
WE WERE ON THE SEA, AND BRAVERY MEANS NOTHING IN THE FACE OF GRAVITY. THUS, WE WERE PROMPTLY AND IGNOMINIOUSLY TOSSED INTO THE DRINK!
GULP

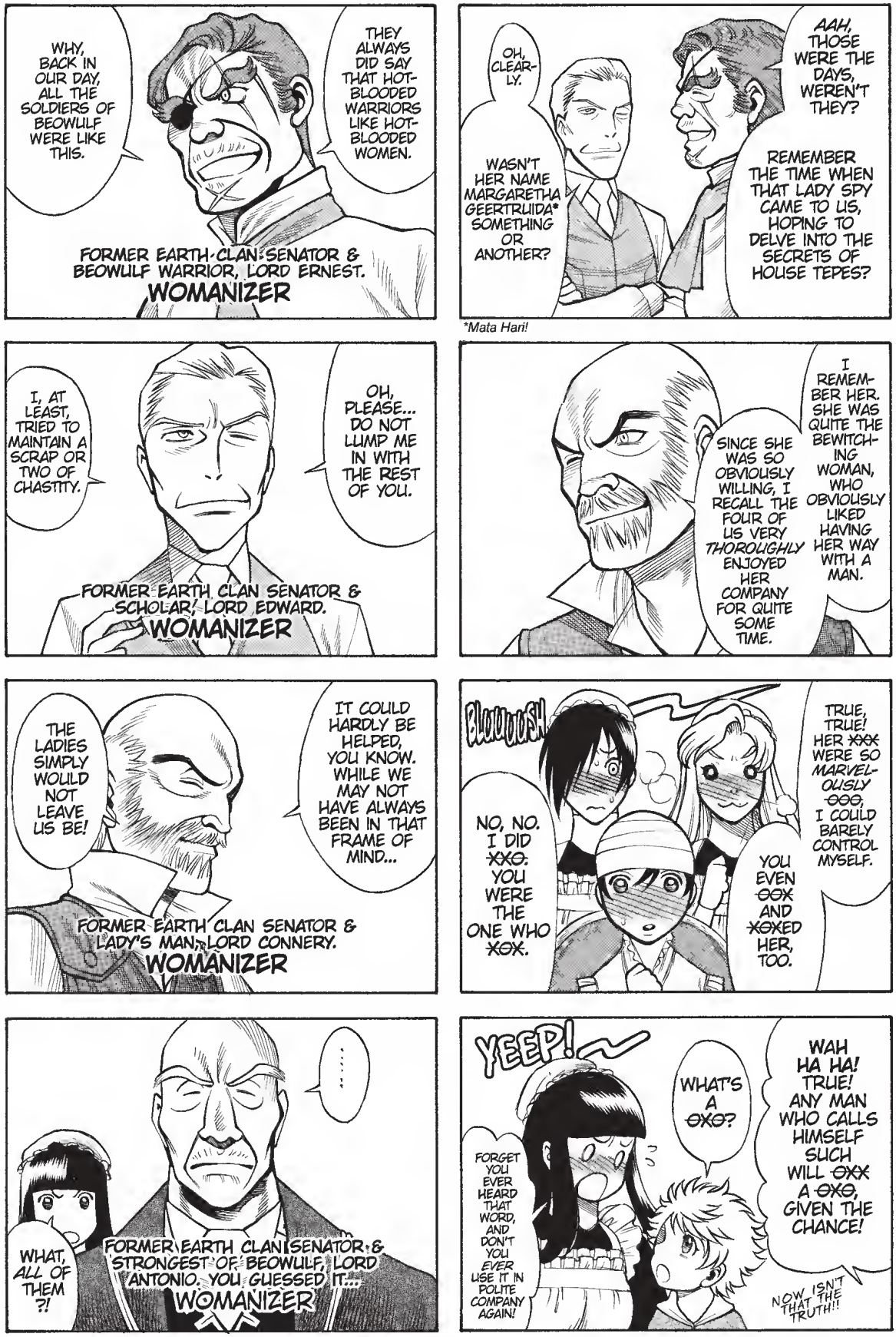

AND WITHOUT THOSE PUPS AROUND TO SPAR WITH, WELL, WE WERE GETTING BORED, TO BE FRANK.
SEE, WE WEREN'T GIVEN THE HONOR OF JOINING THE REST OF BEOWULF ON THEIR TRIP TO SIBERIA.

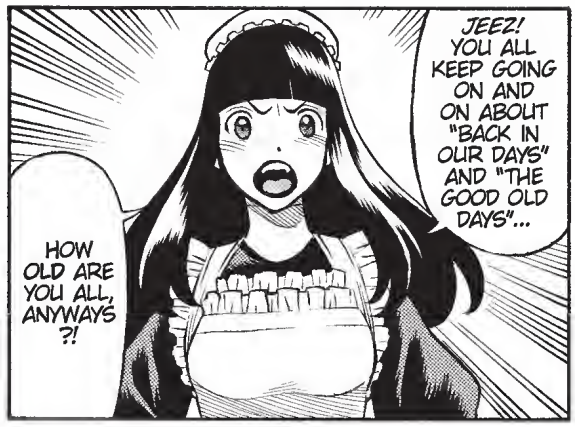

AND THIS WASN'T JUST ANY SHARK! NO, IT WAS THE LARGEST ONE THE WORLD HAD EVER SEEN! ALL FOUR OF US WERE SWALLOWED IN ONE GULP!!
BUT THE DANGER DID NOT STOP THERE, FOR WHAT AWAITED THE POOR, BEDRAGGLED SURVIVORS OF THE SUNKEN GALLEON? A SHARK! A SHARK WHOSE GIANT, TOOTHY JAWS WERE JUST WAITING TO MAKE A MEAL OUT OF POOR LAND-LUBBERS LIKE US!
OH NO~!!

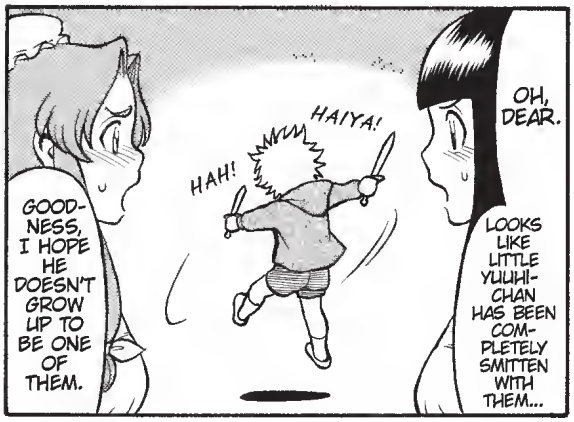

NOW THE FOUR OF US, WE'VE GOT A FAIR FEW STORIES WE COULD SHARE. SO WE DECIDED TO DROP BY FOR A VISIT!
SO LITTLE YUUHI HERE TOLD US OF THIS LOVELY YOUNG LADY, AND HOW SHE VERY MUCH LOVED HEARING STORIES.

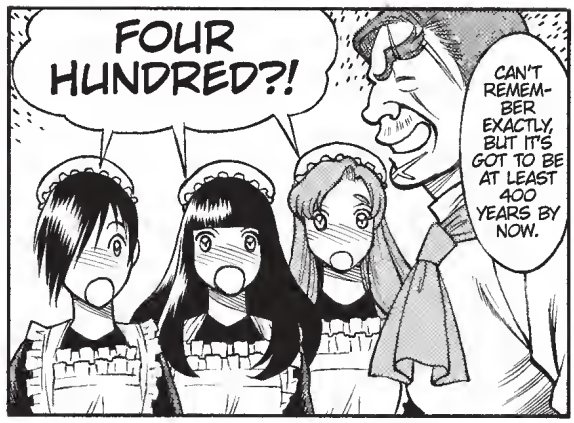

BUT UNFORTU-NATELY FOR THAT SHARK, IT HAD NOT SWALLOWED SIMPLE MEN, BUT WOLVES! AND WE, TOO, WERE HUNGRY! SO AS IT HAD EATEN US, WE ATE IT FROM THE INSIDE OUT!
NO WAY !!
KNOWING THEM, THEY MIGHT ACTUALLY HAVE DONE IT. AND THAT SCARES ME...

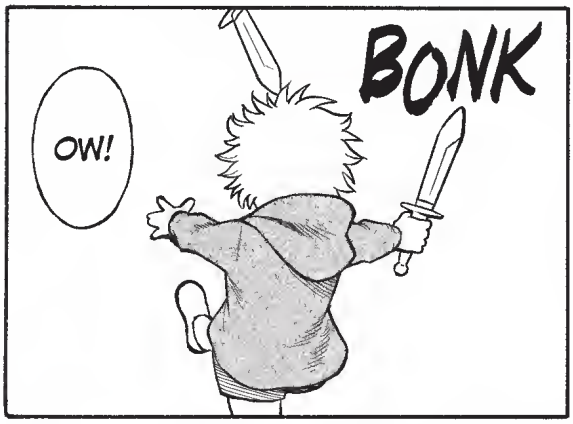

WAH HA
ISN'T THAT THE TRUTH !!
HA HA!
AFTER ALL...
SPENDING TIME WITH SUCH A PRETTY, POLITE LITTLE THING IS A FAR SIGHT BETTER THAN HANGING AROUND SWEATY, HAIRY MEN ALL DAY!
YOU COULD SAY THAT GOES DOUBLE FOR US...

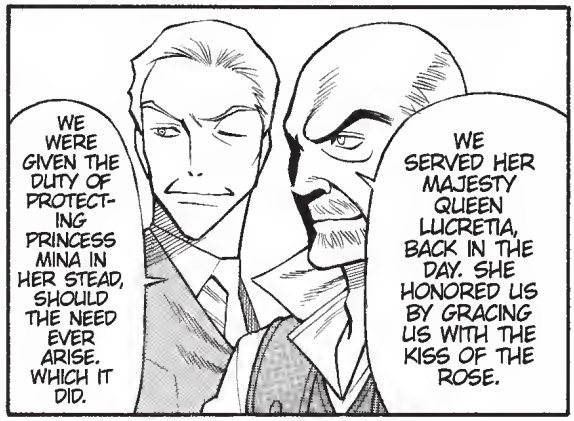

WHY, BACK IN OUR DAY, ALL THE SOLDIERS OF BEOWULF WERE LIKE THIS.
THEY ALWAYS DID SAY THAT HOT-BLOODED WARRIORS LIKE HOT-BLOODED WOMEN.
FORMER EARTH CLAN SENATOR & BEOWULF WARRIOR, LORD ERNEST.
WOMANIZER
OH, CLEARLY.
WASN'T HER NAME MARGARETHA GEERTRUIDA* SOMETHING OR ANOTHER?
AAH, THOSE WERE THE DAYS, WEREN'T THEY?
REMEMBER THE TIME WHEN THAT LADY SPY CAME TO US, HOPING TO DELVE INTO THE SECRETS OF HOUSE TEPES?
*Mata Hari!
I, AT LEAST, TRIED TO MAINTAIN A SCRAP OR TWO OF CHASTITY.
OH, PLEASE... DO NOT LUMP ME IN WITH THE REST OF YOU.
FORMER EARTH CLAN SENATOR & SCHOLAR, LORD EDWARD.
WOMANIZER
I REMEMBER HER. SHE WAS QUITE THE BEWITCHING WOMAN, WHO OBVIOUSLY LIKED HAVING HER WAY WITH A MAN.
SINCE SHE WAS SO OBVIOUSLY WILLING, I RECALL THE FOUR OF US VERY THOROUGHLY ENJOYED HER COMPANY FOR QUITE SOME TIME.
THE LADIES SIMPLY WOULD NOT LEAVE US BE!
IT COULD HARDLY BE HELPED, YOU KNOW. WHILE WE MAY NOT HAVE ALWAYS BEEN IN THAT FRAME OF MIND...
FORMER EARTH CLAN SENATOR & LADY'S MAN, LORD CONNERY.
WOMANIZER
BLEUUUSH
NO, NO. I DID XXO. YOU WERE THE ONE WHO XOX.
YOU EVEN OOX AND XOXED HER, TOO.
TRUE, TRUE! HER XXX WERE SO MARVELOUSLY OOO, I COULD BARELY CONTROL MYSELF.
WHAT, ALL OF THEM ?!
.....
FORMER EARTH CLAN SENATOR & STRONGEST OF BEOWULF, LORD ANTONIO. YOU GUESSED IT...
WOMANIZER
YEEP!~
FORGET YOU EVER HEARD THAT WORD, AND DON'T YOU EVER USE IT IN POLITE COMPANY AGAIN!
WHAT'S A OXO?
WAH HA HA! TRUE! ANY MAN WHO CALLS HIMSELF SUCH WILL OXX A OXO, GIVEN THE CHANCE!
NOW, ISN'T THAT THE TRUTH!!

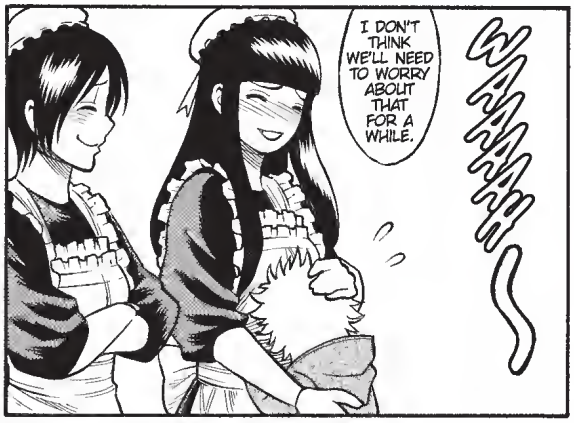


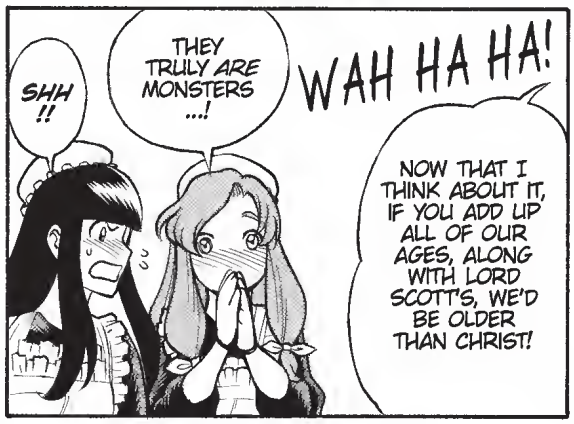












SEE YOU NEXT TIME!!

Dance in the Vampire Bund

Volume 10

story & art by Nozomu Tamaki

STAFF CREDITS

translation	Adrienne Beck
adaptation	Janet Houck
retouch & lettering	Roland Amago
cover design	Nicky Lim
layout	Bambi Eloriaga-Amago
copy editor	Shanti Whitesides
editor	Adam Arnold
publisher	Jason DeAngelis
	Seven Seas Entertainment

DANCE IN THE VAMPIRE BUND VOL. 10
© 2010 Nozomu Tamaki
First published in Japan in 2010 by MEDIA FACTORY, Inc.
English translation rights reserved by Seven Seas Entertainment, LLC.
Under the license from MEDIA FACTORY, Inc., Tokyo.

No portion of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form without written permission from the copyright holders.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

Seven Seas and the Seven Seas logo are trademarks of Seven Seas Entertainment, LLC. All rights reserved.

Visit us online at www.gomanga.com

ISBN: 978-1-934876-55-8

Printed in Canada

First printing: July 2011

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

THE END

YOU'RE READING THE WRONG WAY

This is the last page of
Dance in the Vampire Bund
Volume 10

This book reads from right to left, Japanese style. To read from the beginning, flip the book over to the other side, start with the top right panel, and take it from there.

If this is your first time reading manga, just follow the diagram. It may seem backwards at first, but you'll get used to it! Have fun!